

291/49

THE COMPLETE  
HISTORY  
OF  
ENGLAND,  
FROM THE  
DESCENT of JULIUS CÆSAR,  
TO THE  
TREATY of AIX LA CHAPELLE, 1748.

Containing the TRANSACTIONS of  
One Thousand Eight Hundred and Three Years.

By T. SMOLLETT, M. D.  
A NEW EDITION.  
VOLUME THE FIRST.

Non tamen pigebit vel incondita ac rudi voce memoriam prioris servitutis, ac  
testimonium præsentium bonorum composuisse. TACIT. Agricola.

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LONDON:  
Printed for R. BALDWIN, in Pater-noster-Row.  
MDCCLXIII.



THE COMPTON  
HISTORICAL  
MUSEUM  
at Stratford-upon-Avon

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Prudence to approach you without the  
ceremony of a formal introduction  
as an introduction is impermissible you  
will punish it by neglect  
In prefixing your name to my paper  
I distinguish all forbidden motives  
I address myself not to the minister but to  
the patriot. What I offer is not a service  
but a tribute, but a tribute due to posterity  
Power and office are advantages  
and authority. They are often used in  
the wicked and the unwise. They  
perpetuate the same between accident  
and caprice. To-day, you stand con-  
spicuous at the helm of state: to-morrow  
you may repose yourself in the shade of  
private virtue. My veneration is attached  
to permanent qualities: qualities that exist  
independent of favour or of fashion.



To the RIGHT HONOURABLE

WILLIAM PITT, Esq.

One of his MAJESTY'S Principal Secretaries  
of STATE\*.

S I R,

**I** Presume to approach you without the ceremony of a formal introduction: if my intrusion is impertinent, you will punish it by neglect.

IN prefixing your name to my performance, I disclaim all fordid motives. I address myself, not to the minister, but to the patriot. What I offer is not a sacrifice to interest; but a tribute due to superior merit. Power and office are adventitious and transitory. They are often vested in the wicked and the worthless. They perpetually fluctuate between accident and caprice. To-day, you stand conspicuous at the helm of state: to-morrow, you may repose yourself in the shade of private virtue. My veneration is attached to permanent qualities: qualities that exist independent of favour or of faction:

\* This dedication was first printed in 1757.

## D E D I C A T I O N.

qualities which you can neither forfeit nor resign. I respect those shining talents by which you have distinguished yourself above all your cotemporaries. I revere that integrity which you have maintained in the midst of corruption. I appeal to you as a consummate judge <sup>of</sup> literary merit; as an undaunted assertor of British liberty; as a steady legislator intimately acquainted with the constitution of your country, which you have so nobly defended from encroachment and violation.

SHOULD the History I now present, have the good fortune to acquire your approbation, I shall bear, without repining, the insults I may sustain from the virulence of malignant censure. Should it be found altogether unworthy of your notice and regard, it will naturally sink into oblivion. Whatever may be its fate with you, or with the public, I gladly seize this opportunity to declare that I am, with the most perfect esteem and admiration,

S I R,

Your most obedient servant,

T. SMOLLETT.

P L A N  
OF  
THE COMPLETE HISTORY  
OF  
E N G L A N D.

**S**O many Histories of England have already appeared, that the editor of this performance finds it absolutely necessary to make the public acquainted with the motives which have induced him to usher into the world, another work on the same subject.

The author does not pretend to have discovered any authentic records which have escaped the notice of other historians ; or to have thrown such lights upon particular facts, as must alter the received opinions of mankind, touching the material circumstances of the narration. His aim is to retrench the superfluities of his predecessors, and to present the public with a succinct, candid, and complete history of our own country, which will be more easy in the purchase, more agreeable in the perusal, and less burthenfome to the memory, than any work of the same nature, produced in these kingdoms.

By the enormous bulk and prolixity of every other English history that stands in any degree of reputation, many readers have been deterred from learning what every person ought to know, and even totally discouraged from engaging in  
the



## PLAN of the HISTORY.

the most entertaining and useful of all rational enquiries.

The author has avoided all useless disquisitions, which serve only to swell the size of the volume, interrupt the thread of the narrative, and perplex the reader. His purpose was to compile an history, not to compose a dissertation.

He has waved all remarks of his own, except such as seemed absolutely necessary, that he might not encumber the page, and disgust the reader, by anticipating his reflection, and forestalling his judgment.

He has foreborn to record foreign incidents in which England has no immediate concern; as the design is not to publish the annals of Europe, but the transactions of one people. Neither has he literally transcribed every treaty of alliance, and each single decree of parliament, so as to form a monstrous medley of the highest enterprizes of power, and the lowliest precautions of civil œconomy. Such a work would be a dry, tedious, fatiguing collection of public acts and statutes, rather than a well connected detail of historical events.

He has been upon his guard against that affectation of singularity, which is so apt to betray an author into a labyrinth of vague conjectures, through which the truth often vanishes from his researches.

He values himself upon being entirely free from all national jealousy and prejudice; and altogether uninfluenced by that illiberal partiality which has disgraced the works of many English historians. He is soured by no controversy in religion: he is inflamed by no faction in politics.



## PLAN of the HISTORY.

ties **THE** object of his enquiry; and candid information the scope of his labour.

He pretends to communicate a summary idea of the antient inhabitants of this island, as described by Greek and Latin authors, the only sources from which we can draw any certain intelligence concerning the original possessors of Britain.

After a distinct detail of Cæsar's descent, the progress of the Roman arms in England under successive emperors, the formation of the province, their improvements in the civil policy of the country, the gradual declension of their power, and their final retreat to the continent; he proceeds to describe the first dawnings of the Christian faith in Britain; the arrival, settlement, character, and genius of the Saxon adventurers: the rise and progress of our constitution in church and state: and the changes it underwent in consequence of the Norman conquest.

He mentions every material transaction, whether of war or peace, whether public or private, which might conduce to the illustration of the subject.

He collects his materials from the most authentic historians, to whose works he refers in the margin. He delineates the characters of princes, from the uniform tenour of their public conduct, compared with striking passages in private life, which often exhibit the real, naked picture, uncloaked with reserve, undisguised by formality or dissimulation.

He records every remarkable improvement in arts and sciences, which the world has owed to the natives of this kingdom.

He

## PLAN of the HISTORY.

He exhibits a separate view of ecclesiastical affairs, digested into distinct periods, from the first preaching of Christianity in Britain, to the latest regulations of church-government.

He has endeavoured to write in a clear, succinct, nervous stile; to arrange his materials with accuracy and precision; to expatiate on the most interesting circumstances; and to entertain the imagination; while he informs the understanding.

In order to assist the memory, and supply proper pauses for the attention, he has planned the work into a certain number of books or parts; each comprehending the transactions of one important period.

The chronology is ascertained from year to year on the margin.

All obscure allusions are explained in notes at the bottom of the page; together with the genealogical deduction of every prince's posterity and marriages, reputed portents, detached events, and private anecdotes; which, tho' tending to elucidate the story, would, if inserted in the context, disunite the chain of incidents, and spoil the uniformity of the execution.

On the whole, this work is formed upon a plan which was the result of the most mature deliberation; and has one advantage over all other histories of England, namely, that of being brought home to our own times and observation, from the earliest age of our historical credit to the last treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle.



THE  
HISTORY  
OF  
ENGLAND,  
BOOK FIRST.

From the earliest ACCOUNTS of BRITAIN  
to the NORMAN CONQUEST.

**T**HE first and most important effort of human genius appears to have been the art of transmitting and perpetuating ideas; and this shines in nothing more conspicuous than in the labours of historians, which not only present us with a review of all those mighty events which influenced the fate of nations, but also communicate to our inquiry the whole progress of improvement, the whole circle of knowledge and experience. In this delightful study we become acquainted with the characters and even the persons of those heroes who triumphed over barbarity, of those legislators who strengthened the bands of society, and of those philosophers who instructed, polished, and reformed mankind. The faculties of the mind are opened and enlarged in the contemplation of such an expanded field: the humane passions are interested in the fortune of the remotest nations,

An introductory reflection.

NUMB. I. B

## HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

nations, because humanity is every where the same ; and, howsoever divided by mountains, rivers, and seas, severed by policy, dispersed by accident, or distinguished by a difference of laws, language, climate, or complexion, we are all the children of one parent ; all the brethren of one family. The understanding unfolds and ripens in proportion to the exercise it undergoes ; the memory retains the reflection, profits by the example, and the heart glows with a laudable emulation to rival the practice of recorded virtue.

Of all the districts in this wide extended field, no province exhibits more illustrious scenes and characters ; no history a richer fund of entertainment and instruction, than that of Britain, which we now purpo'e to display ; and surely no subject can merit our attention so much, no theme so warmly engage our hearts, as that which treats of our own country ; as that which expatiates upon incidents relating to those very ancestors from whom we ourselves are immediately derived. Yet, how interesting soever the subject may be, the task is not to be performed without difficulty and even disgust, arising from the obscurity that veils the origin of this as well as of all other nations, and the perplexed though elaborate discussions of those who have fondly endeavoured, by wild conjectures, to trace it backwards into the shades of ignorance and allegory of fable.

Among other uncertainties, nothing seems to have puzzled those searchers into antiquity more than the name of the island, which has been variously pronounced by various nations, according to the particular genius and termination of every respective language.

Of the name  
of Britain,

The Phœnicians, who first traded to the western coast of the island for tin, lead, and skins, distinguished the country by the appellation of Bratanack,



tanack, which, in their language, signifies The Land of Tin; and it was afterwards known to the Greeks by the names of Albion, Bretanike, and Bretanea, which last was adopted by the Romans.

Aristotle.  
Strabo. Dio.  
Diod. Sic.  
Herodian.

\*Abundance of learning and conjecture hath been displayed in endeavours to investigate the derivation of these names, which however is not yet ascertained; nor if it were, could the discovery serve any other purpose than that of gratifying the impatience of idle curiosity. Whatever may have given birth to the name, Britain, the favourite residence of liberty and plenty, mistress of wealth and commerce, and undoubted sovereign of the sea, is one of the largest islands of the known world, extending one thousand eight hundred and thirty-six miles in circuit, situated at the distance of twenty miles from the coast of France, to the north west of Europe, in a triangular form, bounded by the Atlantic and German oceans that meet from the east and west, forming the British channel on the south, fronting Ireland on the west, and washed on the north by the Deucalionian sea, famous for its numerous isles, that in a manner guard their parent coast, and look like so many jewels in the British crown.

its form,  
situation.

The streight of Dover, by which it is divided from the continent, is so narrow as to have given birth, in all probability, to an ancient tradition,

\* Albion may be derived from the Greek *αλβιον*, the Roman *Albus*, or the Sabine *Alpus*, which signify White; applied to the chalky cliffs of Britain seen from the continent, or more probably from the Celtic *Alp* or *Alb*, which carries the same meaning; though others maintain, that all mountains and high places were by the Celts known and distinguished by the name of *Alpes* or *Albes*. Vide note on Tac. de mor. Ger.

As for *Britannia*, Camden deduces it from *Brith*, signifying Painted, in the British language, and *Tania*, a Greek word for *Regio*, or *Tan*, which has the same signification in the British tongue.

But *Luwyd* the British antiquary contends for *Prydain* or *Prydcain*, a Welsh appellation, importing a White Colour; and *Carte* subscribes to this conjecture.



Veritegan.

Vid. Philo-  
sophical  
Transacti-  
ons, n. 275.  
& seq.and natural  
advantages.

importing that Britain was originally joined to France, from which it was afterwards severed by the universal deluge, or some other violent shock of nature. This notion hath been espoused by many authors, ancient as well as modern; and one writer in particular, endeavours to support the conjecture, by observing, that the appellation of cliffs given to the rocks on both sides of the channel, seems to imply their having been cleft asunder; that the extent of these rocks is exactly the same on each side, fronting one another; that they have the same appearance, rising perpendicular and abrupt from the shore, unlike the gradual ascent of the hills and mountains on other coasts, that generally slope towards the adjoining valleys; and that a ridge of rock runs across the streights at the bottom of the sea. To these observations we may add, that Holland, Zealand, and the lower parts of Flanders plainly appear to have been once covered with the sea, which would naturally leave them dry on finding such a passage; and that the setting of two such furious tides, as must have flowed from the eastern and western oceans, may very well be supposed, in a series of ages, to have forced their way through such a narrow isthmus.

Such a separation (if it really happened) was an advantage to Great-Britain, inasmuch as it formed a noble barrier to defend this island from the insults, intrigues, and invasions of its neighbours, of whom it was in other respects altogether independent; for it produces all the necessaries and comforts of life: the soil is fruitful, the air, though moist, not unhealthy: it abounds with cattle, corn, timber, minerals, and metals: the windings and indentations of the coast afford numberless bays, creeks, and harbours for the security of shipping, and the surrounding sea teems with myriads of fish for food and exportation. Here the summer is not scorching,

ing, nor the winter severe; the heat is tempered with cooling breezes, the frost is tamed by the warmth of the sea, the ground is cloathed with a perpetual verdure, and the country diversified with hill and dale, so as to exhibit a variety of enchanting prospects to the view.

All these natural advantages could not fail to attract the notice of those who wandered about in quest of habitations, and we find it was peopled long before mankind had invented the art of transmitting events to posterity; for, the Phœnicians, Greeks, and Romans, in extending their commerce and navigation, found Britain already populous and powerful, and traded with the inhabitants some ages before the christian æra. Of these the Phœnicians seem first to have discovered the western extremities of the island, from whence they exported tin and other commodities: and considered this traffic as a matter of such consequence, that they erected a number of forts or castles in that province which is now called Cornwall, for the protection of the traders, and the preservation of that commerce†. Nay, so jealous were they of this advantage, that they concealed the voyage from all the rest of the world; and when one of their ships was followed by a Roman vessel, fitted out to discover her destination, the Phœnician pilot ran the bark ashore, that the Romans might be disappointed in their aim; and at his return was indemnified out of the public treasury.

Strabo. Plin.  
nat. hist.  
Herod. de  
Casterid.

Strab. lib. 3.

† Meneg, part of Cornwall, is of Phœnician derivation, and signifies Bounded by the sea: in this peninsula is a heap of stones on the banks of a lake called Erth or Arith, which is the Phœnician word for lake; the famous hill Godolian implies plenty of metal, in the same language; Penn, a hill, comes from the Phœnician Penna, and

Tra from Tera, signifying a castle. These two initial words occur remarkably often in the names of Cornish places; for example, Penrose, Penzance, Pengarsick, Penwarren, Pendennis, Penwin, Pertuan, Penrock: Trewose, Trenowth, Tregenno, Trevascus, Trenora, Treworgan, Trelistock, Treuses, Tremardart, Tregonoe.

The British isles, including those of Scilly, called by the Greeks Cassiterides, were discovered by the Phœnicians about four hundred and fifty years before the birth of Christ; and a trade to these parts was opened by the Carthaginians, who, about the year of Rome three hundred and seven, sent Hanno and Hamilcar with two fleets to sea, north and south from the streights of Gibraltar, with a view to discover the western coasts of Africa and Europe, with the islands that lay in the Atlantic ocean. Hamilcar, who was charged with the northern voyage, having coasted along Spain and Gaul, discovered the island of Great-Britain; and sailing up the channel, penetrated into the German ocean as far as the Baltic. Long before this period, however, Britain was peopled from the continent; and almost all authors, who have treated on this subject, agree that the first inhabitants owed their origin to the Celtæ or Gauls that settled on the opposite shore. A supposition founded upon the evident conformity between them in the circumstances of laws, religion, language, manners, and complexion: for they knew not the use of letters, and had no history but oral tradition.

The manner  
in which it  
was first  
peopled.

Some ac-  
count of  
the Celtæ.

Those Celtæ, Galatæ, Gauls, or Cimbri, are said to have been the descendants of Gomer, the son of Japhet, who having settled originally in the East, multiplied to such a degree, that they were obliged to send off colonies, one of which, under the conduct of Acmon, penetrated into Europe, where he established the empire of the Titans: this was farther extended by his successors, Saturn, Jupiter, Dis, and Mercury or Teutat, who conquered all the western parts of Europe, and maintained his sway to the extremities of Germany and Gaul. Teutat, from whom the Teutones pretend to derive their origin, was a wise and virtuous prince, who ruled with clemency and justice, en-  
cou.



couraging the arts of peace, and particularly commerce; from whence he acquired the appellation of *Mercur*, which, in the language of the *Celtæ*, signifies a Trading man. Pezron Antiquité des Celtes.

\* It was in his reign, when navigation began to be first practised, that a colony of his adventurous subjects, allured by the appearance of Britain, which they beheld from the coast of Gaul, embarked in open boats, and arrived at this island, of which they took immediate possession; and these retired into the inland parts of the country, where they led a life of indolent, pastoral simplicity, without engaging in commerce with their neighbours, or even employing themselves in the cultivation of their lands. They seem to have lived abstracted from all intercourse and communication, and devoted their whole attention to the superstitious rites of their religion, which they piqued themselves upon handing down pure and sacred from all innovation to their descendants, which *Cæsar* in after-ages supposed to be the *Aborigines* of the country, because they inhabited the more interior parts of the island, and differed so widely in their manners and customs from the people who were settled on the sea coast for the convenience of traffic.

Without pretending to refute or acquiesce in this ingenious theory, which cannot be supported by historical authority, inasmuch as the event is said to have happened before the use of records, or even of letters, was known; we shall only observe, that when *Cæsar* arrived in Britain, he found the maritime places possessed by colonies of the *Belgæ*, who,

\* *Carte*, in his history of England, has inserted a detail of those kings and their migrations, from *Pezron's Antiquité des Celtes*, which is a work of much labour and little authority; inasmuch as the superstructure he rears, is founded on occasional hints from Greek authors, bewildered in the darkness of Mythology, conceits of the fables, and vague conjectures of the author's own imagination.

invited by the prospect of spoil or traffic, had transported themselves from the opposite coast of Gaul; and finding the country fertile, salubrious, and commodiously situated for trade, settled upon the sea-side, and introduced the practice of agriculture. These settlers, who quitted the continent at different times, and came from different parts of Gaul, still retained the names of those states from which they were derived; and some authors imagine, that in the course of these migrations, the Britons among others arrived from the main land, being no other than a colony from a people distinguished by that appellation, who inhabited the province now known by the name of Picardy.

Sanfon.  
Dionysius.  
Pliny nat.  
hist.

That there was such a people inhabiting the sea-coast, from Flanders to the extremity of Bretagne, is hardly to be questioned: but whether they were the ancestors or descendants of the Albion Britons, we shall not attempt to determine: certain we are, the islanders were very numerous, bold and enterprising; and as they did not cultivate their lands, they might find it difficult, in the progress of their multiplication, to subsist in their own country; an inconvenience which they would naturally seek to remedy, by waisting over colonies to the continent of Gaul. Indeed we conceive this expedient might have been frequently practised from both sides of the channel, according to the power of the invader, and the emergency of the occasion. Be that as it may, the inland inhabitants of Britain, who called themselves \* Cumri, as being descended

\* The Welch to this day call themselves Kumero, Cymro, Kumeri, and their language Kumeræg, is evidently, saith Cambden, derived from Gomer the son of Japhet, whose posterity extended themselves to the remotest parts of Europe. As for the fable of Bru-

tus the Trojan, devised by Geoffry of Monmouth, and copied by Matthew of Westminster and other monkish historians, it is rejected by all men of learning and reflection, as an idle, ill-invented story, trumped up in emulation to the Romans, whom Virgil in his *Æneis*



## HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

9

scended from the antient Cimbri, studiously avoided all correspondence with the new-comers, whom they considered as interlopers, who had encroached upon their possessions. These original Britons are represented by Julius Cæsar, as extremely numerous, living in cottages thatched with straw, like those of the Gauls, and feeding large herds of cattle: they sowed no corn, but lived upon flesh and milk, of which however they did not know how to make cheese: their hair flowed down upon their backs and shoulders, though they shaved all their face except their upper lip: they were clad in skins, and their bodies painted with woad †, in order to render them the more dreadful to their enemies; they used promiscuous copulation, and were even incestuous in their venery, and their children were deemed the progeny of those who had first deprived the women of their virginity. They abstained from eating hares, fowls, and geese, though they kept them about their houses for pleasure; they used imported brass or iron rings of a certain weight, instead of money; they were like the Gauls, divided into three classes or orders; namely, the Druids, the Equites, and the Plebeians: but these last had no share in the administration. The Equites were their nobles that commanded in war, and the supreme magistracy was vested in the Druids, who

Cæsar's description of the inhabitants.

Æneis had so elegantly flattered with the supposition of their being descended from the Trojans. Of equal authenticity with this legend, is the other, importing that this island was called A bion after the son of Neptune, who conquered it from the descendants of Dis Samothæ, and was afterwards vanquished and slain by Hercules, in a pitched battle fought near the mouth of the Rhone. Hollingshead's Chronicle.

† Cæsar says, they tinged their bodies with glass. And that this

was actually the case, will appear very probable to those who have handled Kelp; in other words the sea-weed burnt and vitrified, a substance used in the composition of glass, which being slightly rubbed upon the human body, communicates a blue colour, which is not washed out but with great difficulty. We know the Britons settled on the sea-coast, made utensils of glass; and it is natural to suppose, they found their account in bartering or selling this substance to the inland inhabitants.

pre-

Of the  
Druids.

presided over all their civil as well as religious jurisdiction.

These chiefs of their legislature and superstition are supposed to have adopted the principles and ceremonies of the Curetes, who were also descended from Gomer, and to have derived their appellation from the Celtic word Deru, which signifies an oak, because they held this tree as sacred, and celebrated their rites and sacrifices in sequestered groves where the silence and solitude of the place assisted their contemplation. They, and they only, pretended to exercise the art of divination; they offered the sacrifices in public as well as in private, and interpreted the will of heaven. They were always attended by a concourse of young men, the charge of whose education they undertook: they decided in all controversies, whether the dispute turned upon misdemeanors, capital crimes, inheritance, or property; they acquitted or condemned; they distributed rewards or punishments; and if any person refused to abide by their decisions, he was interdicted from all religious rites and intercourse, deprived of the benefit of the laws, rendered incapable of any office of trust or honour, and held in universal abhorrence, as a monster of sacrilege and impiety.

One particular Druid presided over all the rest with unlimited authority; and at his death, the next in learning, dignity, and virtue, was elected as his successor: not but that sometimes there was a warm competition for this honourable pontificate; and, in that case, it was generally determined by force of arms; though the Druids, by their profession, were exempted from the hardships and perils of war, as well as from taxes and all other kinds of imposition. Such immunities could not fail to invite numbers into their order, and even those of the prime nobility. They opened a session once a year,

year, in a certain consecrated place, in which all causes were tried and determined: and there too they harangued to their pupils on the subjects of religion, law, and philosophy. They taught the immortality and transmigration of the soul, which they believed in common with the Pythagoreans, to whom (as some writers imagine) they communicated this doctrine: they worshipped one supreme God, immense and infinite; but would not confine their adoration to a temple, because they deemed it inconsistent with those attributes: yet they admitted an inferior class of deities, and payed divine honours to Jupiter, Mars, Apollo, and Mercury, under the denomination of Taranus, Hesus, Belenes, and Teutates. To these, some authors have added Minerva; Diana, under the name of Adraste; and Hercules, who was known to the Britons by the appellation of Ogmius the god of Eloquence.

Clem. Alex.  
andrin.

Cæf. Com.  
Lactant.  
Lucan.

The Druids adored their gods in prayer, thanksgiving, and sacrifice. They composed an infinite number of songs and hymns in praise of their deities, which were sung in concert, accompanied with the music of harps, upon solemn and regularly revolving festivals, instituted in honour of their divinities; and these were also celebrated with dancing, feasting, interludes, and games, resembling the Delian ceremonies, performed, and consecrated to Apollo and Diana. Indeed their whole law and religion seem to have been taught in verse; for, some Druids spent twenty years in learning to repeat these rhymes, which were never committed to writing; either because the use of letters was unknown; or that they did not chuse to communicate their mysteries to the vulgar; or lastly, because they imagined the understanding would improve by the exercise of the memory, which would have been rendered of little consequence had their poetry

Their religion.



poetry been perpetuated in written volumes or records. The task of composing and reciting those hymns belonged to the Bards, who are mentioned by Strabo as distinct from the Druids and the Vates, these last having been appointed to perform the sacrifices and rites of divination: whereas the Druids studied natural and moral philosophy, together with the motion of the heavenly bodies. With respect to the Bards, they were set apart for composing poems in honour of the immortal gods and deceased heroes; which they sung to the music of the lyre. But, all these distinctions seem to be no other than the distribution of particular functions among different individuals that composed the same society.

Strabo.  
Posidonius.  
Marcel-  
linus.

Of the bards  
and sacri-  
fices.

The name of Bard is of Phœnician derivation, and was probably introduced into Britain by that people, who likewise infected them with great part of their superstition, and taught them the cruel and barbarous practice of human sacrifice, for which the Phœnicians were notorious; although the Gauls, the Lacedæmonians, Thracians, Scythians, and almost all the nations of Europe, were at that period addicted to the same abominable act of inhumanity. They probably imagined, that the more valuable the life, the more acceptable was the sacrifice: and the Britons and Gauls adopted this rite the more eagerly, as they deemed it subservient to the divining of future events; for having stabbed the victim, they prognosticated good or evil fortune from the appearance of the streaming blood, and the manner in which the members were convulsed; and afterwards formed omens and auguries from the inspection of the entrails. A ceremony so inhuman and detestable, that the Romans, contrary to their usual clemency and political regard to conquered nations, soon after they subdued Britain, extirpated the whole race

Diod. Sic.

race of those religious butchers, with almost every memorial of their superstition.

Tiberius suppressed those human sacrifices in Gaul; and Claudius destroyed the Druids of that country; but they subsisted in Britain till the reign of Nero, when Paulus Suetonius reduced the island of Anglesey, which was the place of their retreat, and overwhelmed them with such unexpected and sudden destruction, that all their knowledge and tradition, conveyed to them in the songs of their predecessors, perished at once. We have already observed, that the worship of the Druids was, like that of some of the old patriarchs, as well as the rites of many heathen nations, performed in solitary groves, and that in all probability they derived their name from *Deru*, signifying an oak; a tree for which they expressed the utmost veneration. Their religious places were surrounded with oaken fences; their altars were strewed with the leaves, and encircled with the boughs of oak, which afforded also wreaths to crown the victims, and garlands to adorn the brows of the bards, dancers, and devotees, who assisted at their festivals.

*Mela, l. 3.*

They believed there was a very sublime mystery contained in the mistletoe, which they sought with eagerness, found with transport, and gathered in the midst of an infinite concourse of people, who flocked from all quarters at the stated times appointed for this solemnity, to welcome what they deemed the pledge and earnest of future felicity. On this occasion, the Druid, clad in a white garment, ascended the tree, and cropped the mistletoe with a consecrated golden pruning hook, as the annual present of the Gods, and a certain remedy against all diseases.

*Their veneration for the mistletoe of the oak.*

Though the Druids had originally no temples, either because they were ignorant of the art of building stone edifices, or held it impious and absurd to worship



worship the immensity of the Supreme Being within narrow walls, erected by the feeble hands and circumscribed invention of man; they, in process of time, adopted the practice of other nations, and raised temples and monuments in honour of the inferior deities whom they adored: these, however, were open at the top, and generally consisted of rude stone pillars placed in a circular form, with a sloping altar in the middle\*; and hard by a sort of an obelisk, bored in different parts for the convenience of binding the unhappy victims, or of fastening those colossi of basket work, which, as Cæsar relates, were filled with the wretches devoted to the flames.

Cæsar de  
Bello Gal-  
lico.

Exclusive of this diabolical superstition, the Druids are said to have made a very good use of their power and influence: they were celebrated for the innocence of their manners, and their equitable and impartial administration of justice: they inspected the conduct of magistrates, took care that the laws should be put in execution, vacated all illegal acts of the sovereign, whom they scrupled not to depose, when he was unduly elected, or abused his authority. Nor was their importance altogether owing to their religious character, but depended in a great measure on the dignity of their birth, and the interest of their family; for the function of a Druid neither derogated from their nobility, nor excluded them from the highest offices in the state: they continued to enjoy both without the least restriction, and some of them were even known to exercise the sovereign power. Such were

\* The remains of such a temple are still to be seen at Stonehenge, near Ambresbury in Wiltshire; and there are monuments of the same kind in the Orkneys and western isles of Scotland; but, besides these, we find a number of conical heaps

or eminences all over the kingdom, with a flat stone always at the top, known by the name of Carnedd, on which, in all likelihood, the Druids offered sacrifices, and perhaps instructed the people in the duties of religion and morality.

## HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

13

the brothers Divitiacus and Dumnorix, princes of the Edui, mentioned by Cicero and Cæsar, who headed the armies of their country; and such, perhaps, was the chief of every tribe, who, though he did not live in their colleges and seminaries, exercised the functions of the priesthood, like the fathers of families in the early ages of the world. Those chiefs might well maintain the same character and prerogative among the people of their respective clans, which were no other than multiplied families, that, for their common safety and advantage, united together to form particular states, like the Gauls, under the government of an ordinary senate, and an extraordinary general council, which met annually, and assembled on special occasions.

It is natural to suppose, that the petty princes of Gaul and Britain would eagerly desire to be associated with the order of the Druids, that they might make themselves perfect in the arts of augury and divination, so useful to strengthen their authority, and establish an absolute submission and dependence in their vassals; and even these, though they spent their vigorous days in active scenes of life, for the interest of their country, or the advantage of their own private concerns, yet, in their decline, might have retired to those seminaries, where they could better indulge their contemplation, and contribute to the instruction of the young noblemen who put themselves under their tuition; for no plebeian could be admitted into their society.

The great power and quality of the Druids.

Mela, l. 3.

The institution of the Druids, notwithstanding the dangerous power that was vested in their hands, will appear to have been extremely well calculated for preventing rapine, violence, and outrage, among a passionate, vindictive, savage people, like the Gauls and Britons, living in separate dynasties,  
divided

divided by particular interests, and subject to perpetual feuds and animosities. The Druids, I say, will appear to have been extremely well qualified for mitigating their ferocity, and preventing the desperate effects of their mutual jealousy and quarrels; when we consider that those philosophers were men of the first quality, connected with the contending parties by the ties of consanguinity and alliance, uncorrupted by vice and luxury, weaned from all interested attachments, fitted by their education and experience for investigating the truth, and determining disputes according to the rules of equity, and invested with the character that inspired awe and veneration. With these advantages, they employed their mediation occasionally, when the peace and welfare of their country were at stake; they threw themselves between embattled armies ready to engage, disarmed them of their rage, and effected an accommodation by the strength of their remonstrances, and the irresistible power of their elocution\*.

Diod. Sicul.  
l. 3.

In

\* The seminaries erected for the education of the Gaulish Druids, were at Dreux; and those of the Britons in the isle of Anglesey, where the remains of their colleges are still to be seen; but the chief seat of their learning and religion is supposed to have been in the Hebrides, or western isles of Scotland; and Carte, in his history of England, has bestowed great pains to confirm this conjecture. He attempts to prove, from Cluver's *Germania Antiqua*, and other authors, that the British isles, as well as all the Celtic nations in the north of Europe, were known to the Greeks by the name of Hyperborei; that the Hebrides, or rather the isle of Harries, in particular, was the place described by Diodorus Siculus, who says, he copied Hecataeus, and other authors,

in his description of the Hyperborean island, lying in the ocean beyond Gaul, in the north-west of Europe; that many ages before the Phœnicians traded to the coast of Britain, this island was known to the Greeks of Delos, with whom its inhabitants carried on a regular correspondence; transmitting every year the first fruits of the earth, as an offering to the Delian deities, which they themselves also adored with great conformity of worship; and that this intercourse having been intermitted for some time, an Hyperborean Druid, of the name of Abares, was sent to Greece to renew this league of friendship and alliance, about six hundred years before the Christian Æra.—True it is, Herodotus mentions a nation of the Hyperborei unknown to the Scythians,

but



In the dark ages of ignorance, religion and government could not well be divided, inasmuch as the one was founded upon the other; at least, all obedience and subordination flowed from an opinion of superior power and understanding in the chief, who, in order to maintain this opinion, would naturally call in the illusions of superstition, and set himself up as an interpreter of the will of heaven. Thus, cunning and sagacity in process of time obtained a victory over brutal strength; and thus, the society of Druids became in a manner the legislative power of Gaul and Britain: for, though the civil magistrate wore the trappings of sovereignty; though the ordinary detail of the administration belonged to a senate; and all the princes or chieftains assembled once a year, to deliberate upon the emergencies of the state; no proposal was made, no step taken, without the consent and concurrence of the chief Druid, near the place of whose residence all those extraordinary diets were convened.

*Mona anti-  
qua.*

### The

but greatly respected at Delos, whether they used to send, from time to time, sacred presents of their first-fruits, wrapped in bundles of wheat-straw, like those used by the Thracians in their rites and sacrifices to Diana. These were sent at first by deputies consisting of two virgins and five men, who were received with the greatest honours by the Delians; and when the virgins died, their funerals were celebrated with the utmost solemnity, and even hymns composed in their praise. The Hyperboreans, loth to run the risque of losing the most valuable persons of their nation, in such a tedious and hazardous peregrination, fell afterwards upon another expedient for sending their offerings to the temples of Apollo and Diana: they delivered them to

their neighbours on the continent, requesting that they might be forwarded from one people to another, until they arrived at the Adriatic, where they were put into the hands of the Dodonians, who conveyed them safely to Delos. As the Greeks increased in reputation for learning, the Druids of the Hebrides, dissatisfied with this distant manner of communication, deputed one of their number to go and discover what improvements had been made in knowledge, and renew the antient league with the Delians. This was the famous Abaris celebrated by Jamblicus and Porphyry, who say he was a priest of Apollo; that he travelled over all Greece, and passing to Crotona in Italy, visited Pythagoras, with whom he contracted an intimacy of



The genius  
and disposition  
of the  
Britons.

The original Britons lived in tribes or separate clans, under the aristocratical rule of their several lords; and though some of these uniting, formed themselves into more powerful states, investing particular chiefs with the royal authority, each apart considered himself as an independant sovereign; and a great number being unwilling to undergo the least compulsion or controul, contented themselves with electing a general in times of danger, when they thought themselves obliged to join their forces for their natural safety: not but that they were often blind to their own interest in this particular, and refusing to unite, saw themselves assaulted and reduced in their turns; so that while they fought in single tribes, the whole nation was vanquished. This want of unanimity was the effect of their

friendship. Strabo gives us to understand that Abaris was admired by the Greeks for his politeness and integrity. Himorius describes him as covered with a plaid fastened with a gilded belt that encircled his loins, from whence his trousers descended to the soles of his feet: he carried a bow in his hand, and a quiver hung from his shoulders. He was easy in his address, agreeable in his conversation; a man of great discernment, eager in the pursuit of knowledge, unblemished in his morals; and he spoke the Greek language with great fluency and elocution.

Notwithstanding all the learning which has been displayed, and the ingenious conjectures that have been formed from the situation of the Hebrides, the disposition of the natives, the nature of their worship, and the remains of their temples, to prove that they were the Hyperboreans of which this philosopher was a native; the fact still remains dubious and uncertain. The great antiquity of the event

has removed it without the sphere of distinct observation. Diodorus Siculus, who describes this Hyperborean island, certainly believed it was different from Britain or Ireland, with which he was well acquainted; otherwise he would have distinguished it by its proper name: such a correspondence between the Delians and Hyperborean islanders could not fail to open a trade between Greece and Britain, which did not take place till some ages after this period, tho' many of the states of Greece were then acquainted with navigation. Herodotus, in relating the story of the Hyperborean deputies, does not mention one word of their coming from an island; and looks upon the circumstance of Abaris as a meer fable. In a word, the name of Hyperboreans seems to have been a vague appellation bestowed by the Greeks upon the northern nations which they did not know, and much more applicable to the Laplanders than the inhabitants of the western isles of Scotland.

pride,

pride, levity, and ferocious disposition. They were impatient of discipline and order, inconstant in their pursuits, sudden in their resentments, and barbarous in their revenge.

Strangers to luxury, and even to what are now thought the necessities of life, their wealth consisted in their herds of cattle, which they drove from place to place for the convenience of pasture, like the antient Nomades: as for the tin, lead, iron, corn, ivory bridles, collars, amber, glass vessels, baskets, and other toys, which were exported from Britain, they were manufactured by the Belgæ, and other nations who settled in the maritime parts of the island: the inland inhabitants dealt in nothing but cattle, hides, and tallow, which they bartered for such things as they deemed indispensably necessary; they lived in wretched huts or cabbins made of boughs, and plastered with mud; and even in these they found means to manifest their hospitality to strangers, whom they esteemed as sacred and inviolable. Their diet was simple and parsimonious; their food consisted chiefly of milk and venison; their ordinary drink was water; yet, upon extraordinary occasions, they indulged themselves with a kind of fermented liquor made of barley, honey, or apples; and when intoxicated, never failed to quarrel, like the antient Thracians.

Diod. l. 5.

They were taller, though less robust, than the Gauls; yet their constitutions were inured to hardship and fatigue; and their longevity was the immediate effect of their temperance. The dress of their nobles consisted of a belted plaid of variegated colours, with trousers, that answered the purposes of stockings as well as breeches; and these were common to all the Gauls upon the continent; some of those who could not afford to purchase this habit, covered themselves with skins, and the poorer sort went almost naked. Perhaps it was in conse-

Plutarch de  
Plaut. Philo-  
soph.

Tacit. Vit.  
Agricol.

Frontinus de  
Stratagem.

quence of this want of covering, that they had recourse to the practice of painting their bodies with a substance that shut up the pores, and defended the nerves of the skin from the inclemencies of the weather: thus fortified, Dio Nicæus tells us, they could endure the severest cold, and even remain whole days immersed in mud. They were poorly provided with warlike weapons, either for annoyance or defence: the better sort used the broad sword and dagger, together with javelins and arrows; but the common people had no other offensive arms than sharpened sticks for javelins, and long staves edged with flint, or headed with copper, in lieu of halberds, which were likewise furnished with a kind of bell to scare their enemies in battle. They had neither coats of mail nor helmets, but defended themselves with light round targets of wood, or twigs covered with leather and studded with nails of brass. The only finery which they affected, was in their chariots of war, which were curiously carved and painted, and so contrived as to be stopped and turned on the declivity of hills, with astonishing dexterity: they were generally drawn by two horses; and each contained the driver and a single warrior, who darted his javelins at the enemy, and even drove amongst their thickest ranks, terrifying, trampling, and cutting them in pieces with long scythes fixed to the axle-tree of the wheels. They frequently leaped from their chariots, and fought on foot, until being fatigued or overpowered, they resumed their seats; and they were so expert in the management of those machines, that they could stop or turn them at full speed, sit, stand, run upon the beam, and leap out and in, as the occasion required. They often retreated on purpose to draw the enemy into confusion, and then returned to the attack with redoubled fury; but, they always engaged in separate bodies, that they might have



have room to act, and sustain those that wanted succour. The Britons, as well as the Gauls, were remarkably bold and enterprising; they charged with surprising impetuosity: after having endeavoured to intimidate the foe with the hoarse and dismal sound of their barbarous trumpets, repeated shouts and the clashing of their arms, they advanced to battle, dancing like the Curetes, and singing the valiant deeds of their ancestors. They were war-like, even in their favourite diversion, which was hunting; and, for this reason, their princes and chiefs commonly fixed their habitation in the midst of woods and forests, frequented by the game; and, indeed, this was the situation of all their towns, which were composed of miserable huts, built in spots cleared of wood, which served them as a fortification; for they were almost always at war with one another, or with the colonies of the Belgæ, and other nations, which they could never forgive for their intrusion. This enmity may have become more rancorous after they were invaded by Divitiacus, king of the Sueſſones, who being in great credit with the whole body of the Belgæ, resolved to make their friendship subservient to his ambition, and conquer the island of Britain by their assistance. For this purpose, he, about five and twenty years before Cæsar's expedition, assembled a great army of his own subjects, reinforced by the Bibroci, the Atrebatæ, and other Belgic nations adjoining to his own territories; and passing over into Britain, defeated the natives in several encounters. He subdued the countries at present known by the names of Berks, Oxford, Hants, Wilts, Somerset, and Sussex: in which he planted colonies of his Belgic auxiliaries, after having expelled the Regni and other tribes of the old inhabitants. The Belgæ, who were already settled in Britain, probably submitted and joined him on this occasion; a circum-

Diod. l. i.



stance that could not fail to render them still more odious to the native islanders. These unintermitting hostilities kept up their martial disposition and contempt of danger, which was not confined to the male sex, but shone so remarkably in the British women, that they often rushed into battle, and braved the weapons of the enemy. They always attended their husbands in the field, encouraging them to deeds of glory: no war was undertaken without their advice; they judged of the contraventions of public treaties; they sat in council, and were consulted on the most important occasions.

Plutarch de  
virtute mu-  
lierum.

Their want  
of unanimi-  
ty,

Had the Britons, such as we have described them, brave, honest, and ingenious, been united under one well regulated government, which would have bridled their ferocity, reconciled them to subordination, and provided for the safety of the state; in all probability they would have preserved their freedom and independency against the whole Roman power: but, there was a fatal defect in their constitution, arising from the vast number of petty sovereignties, ruled by their own particular Reguli, who could not be easily brought to act in concert against the common enemy. True it is, a number of these little principalities had already united together into considerable states, either ruled by kings, as the Cattieuchlani, Icenii, and Brigantes; or commanded by a general occasionally elected, as the Silures and Ordovices: but those that lived remote from the danger do not seem to have been affected by the fate of their countrymen who were attacked, or to have favoured them with the least assistance, except the Ordovices, who acted in behalf of their neighbours the Silures.

discipline,  
and necessa-  
ries of war,

Besides, they were very ill supplied with arms, destitute of money and warlike stores, and ignorant of discipline and military experience: they lived in  
a level

a level open country, without inclosure, or any place of rendezvous or retreat, except their impenetrable woods, and inaccessible bogs and mountains in the northern parts of the island; in a word, they were unfurnished of all means of defence, except their native courage and love of liberty. In this naked situation they were alarmed with the news of an invasion, and summoned to make head against the Roman power, commanded and directed by the greatest general that ever lived, who had already triumphed over prodigious armies of Germans and Gauls, acknowledged to be the most powerful nations in Europe, with a body of veteran troops that were deemed invincible.

Julius Cæsar having conquered Gaul, and severely chastised the Germans, who had crossed the Rhine, in order to favour a general revolt and insurrection of their neighbours, resolved to make a descent upon the island of Britain, which was almost altogether unknown to the Romans. His pretence was to punish the islanders, for having sent succours to the Gauls while he waged war against that nation, as well as for granting an asylum to the Belgæ, after having excited them to a rebellion, in consequence of which they were routed, and compelled to abandon their own country. These were sufficient motives in a Roman general, considering the political maxims of that people, who always looked upon the auxiliaries of their enemies as principals in the quarrel, and attacked them accordingly, without any declaration of war, concerning which they were in other cases extremely formal and punctilious. Over and above these inducements, some authors suppose Cæsar to have been influenced by the hopes of finding a great quantity of fine British pearls, which were then much in request. But avarice was no part of his character; and we may with more plausibility suppose, he was, on this occasion,

Julius Cæsar resolves to invade Britain.

Suetonius.

caſion, actuated by that ambition and thirſt of glory which ſeems to have been the characteriſtic of his diſpoſition.

Whatever the true dictates of his heart may have been, he determined to employ the latter part of the ſummer, that remained after his German expedition, in an hoſtile viſit to Britain; and though he ſhould find the ſeaſon too far advanced to make any progreſs in the operations of war, he foreſaw advantage in making himſelf acquainted with the coaſts, creeks, and harbours, as well as with the genius of the inhabitants, which were very little known, even to the traders who went thither on account of commerce. With this view he pre-viously conſulted the merchants, who could give him no ſatisfaction touching the ſize of the iſland, the number of nations by whom it was poſſeſſed, their laws and cuſtoms, their practice in war, or their harbours, that were capable of containing a great number of large veſſels. Thus left to his own conjectures, he detached C. Voluſenus in a frigate to examine the coaſt, and return as ſoon as poſſible with his report; while he himſelf advanced, with all his forces, into the territory of the Morini, which lay neareſt to the Britiſh ſhore; and here he ordered that all his ſhips ſhould be aſſembled, without delay.

Mean while, his deſign being communicated by ſome merchants to the inhabitants of the maritime part of Britain, chiefly thoſe who had removed thither from the oppoſite continent, they ſent ambaffadors to make their ſubmiſſion, and promiſed to deliver hoſtages for their good behaviour. Cæſar received them with great complacency; and having exhorted them to continue ſtedfaſt in the ſame ſentiments, diſmiſſed them to their own country, together with a Britiſh prince, called Comius, whom he had appointed king over the Atrebates, and of  
whoſe



whose attachment and sagacity he was well assured. Knowing this Comius was held in great veneration and esteem in Britain, he directed him to visit the different states, and use his influence in persuading them to solicit the protection of the Romans, which he would grant on his arrival in the island. As for Volusenus, he returned in five days from the coast of Britain, which he had examined from the sea, without daring to land on such an hostile shore; and imparted his observations to Cæsar, who formed his plan accordingly.

Having collected about eighty transports, which he judged sufficient for the embarkation of two legions, and allotted for his cavalry eighteen of a larger burden, that were wind-bound on another part of the coast, at the distance of eight miles, he distributed his officers on board of a few galleys, ordered the rest of his army to be cantoned among the Menapii and part of the Morini, under the conduct of Q. Titurius Sabinus, and L. Aurunculeius Cotta, and left P. Sulpicius Rufus, with a sufficient garrison, to occupy the place and harbour where he now lay.

These precautions being taken, and all the troops destined for the expedition embarked, he set sail with the first fair wind about midnight: and next morning arrived on the coast of Britain, where he saw the rocks and cliffs covered with an infinite number of armed islanders, assembled to oppose his landing. Finding it impracticable to gain the shore in that place, on account of the swelling surf and the impending mountains, from whence his soldiers must have been grievously annoyed by the Britons, he resolved to chuse a more favourable strand, for making his descent. Mean while, as he lay at anchor to wait for that part of the fleet which had not yet arrived, he called a council of his officers, to whom he imparted the remarks of Volusenus,

together

Cæsar embarks with his forces.

Ante C. 55.



*Ante C. 55.* together with his disposition for landing, and the precise order by which every individual was to act in his own province; then taking the first opportunity of the wind and tide, he made the signal for weighing anchor, and sailed about eight miles along-shore, till he found an open road and level country.

The Britons, suspecting his design, detached their cavalry and chariots of war to the same spot, and following with the rest of their forces, took possession of the ground in such a manner, as to hinder the Romans from approaching the shore; for, as their ships drew too much water to float near the beach, the soldiers were obliged to leap overboard; when, being encumbered with the weight of their armour, intangled in the sea, and exposed to the risque of plunging into unknown holes and caverns under water, they did not fight with their usual alacrity, but seemed affrighted at the fury and resolution of the islanders, who not only galled them with their javelins from the shore, but even rushed upon them in the sea, fighting hand to hand with amazing vigour and intrepidity.

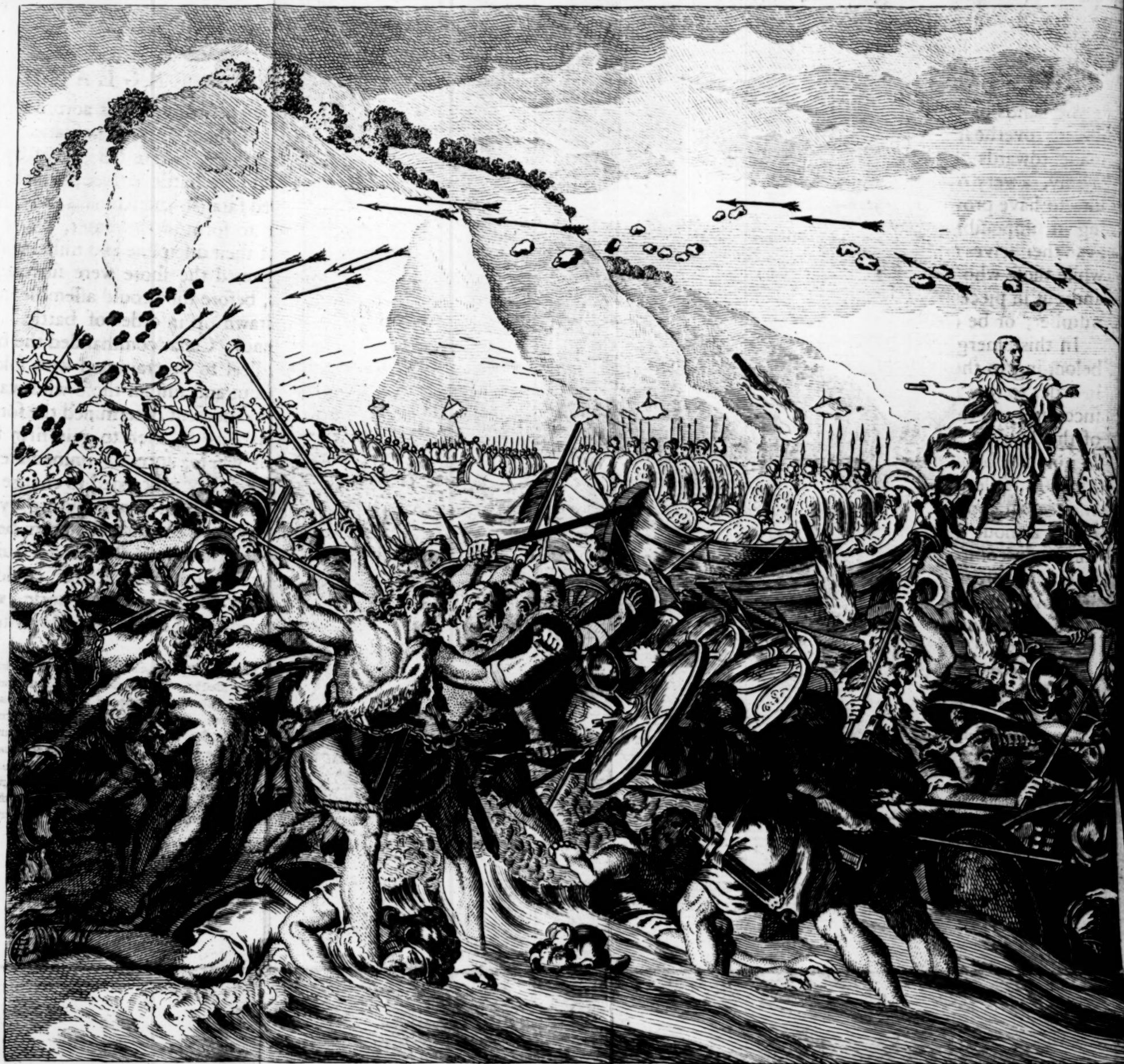
Cæsar, perceiving the disadvantage under which his soldiers laboured, directed his gallies to be rowed nearer to the shore, so as to flank the Britons, against whom the slings, arrows, and projectile machines were plyed with great execution and success; for, the islanders, as much confounded and intimidated at the strange figure of the gallies, the motion of the oars, and the contrivance of the balistæ, as at the damage they sustained from the stones and missile weapons, suddenly paused, and then retired to a small distance. Notwithstanding this check the Romans seemed averse to trust themselves in such a depth of water, when the standard-bearer of the tenth legion observing their backwardness, leaped into the sea, calling aloud, "Follow me, my fellow-soldiers, unless you want to betray the eagle into  
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The LANDING of JULIUS CÆSAR.

*L.P. Boitard sculp*



"the hands of the enemy." Thus adjured, they sprung overboard without further hesitation, and made towards the shore, where being met by the enemy, a very obstinate battle ensued, which had like to have proved fatal to the Romans, who finding it impossible to form in the water, could not avail themselves of their discipline and military skill, while those who gained the shore were surrounded and cut in pieces, before they could assemble in any number, or be drawn up in order of battle.

In this emergency, Cæsar commanded the boats belonging to the fleet to be crammed with soldiers in order to row about and sustain those who wanted succour; and this expedient determined the fortune of the day, by enabling his men to gain firm footing on the beach, where, forming immediately in a considerable body, they proceeded to charge with their usual confidence; and now profiting by that heavy armour which had encumbered them before, they soon compelled the naked Britons to quit the field with precipitation; though Cæsar could not improve his victory for want of his horse, which were not yet arrived\*. The Britons, dispirited by

Ante C. 55.

Lands in Britain, and defeats the natives.

Cæsar Com. Strabo, Dio.

\* This descent was made from the Downes, and the battle fought at the place which is now called Deal, as Cæsar's own account of the expedition plainly evinces; for, the land he first made could be no other than Dover, which is nearer than any other part of Britain to the Gallican shore; and he describes the cliffs with great accuracy. From thence he sailed with the tide setting to the northward, and turning a point of land, which was the fourth foreland, came to an anchor in the Downes, after a progress of eight miles. The distance from Dover, the head-land he turned, the flatness of the beach, and the openness of the country, leave no room to suspect that the place of his land-

ing could be any other than Deal. This supposition is confirmed by the tradition of the Britons as well as of the Saxons, who mentioned the circumstance in a table hung up in Dover castle. This opinion is likewise embraced by Nennius, who says Cæsar ad Dole bellum pugnavit; and Camden observed in this place, the remains of the ramparts which Cæsar raised to defend the shipping from the assaults of the weather and the enemy.

The day of his landing was the 26th of August in the afternoon, as the learned Hally has demonstrated from the circumstances of the history, and the ebbing and flowing of the tides. Philosoph, transf. N<sup>o</sup>. 193.

this



Ante C. 55. this defeat, no sooner recollected themselves from their consternation, than they sent ambassadors to implore the clemency of Cæsar, and along with them Comius the Atrebatian, whom, as a creature of the Roman general, they had seized and shackled on his first landing, before he had an opportunity of signifying the cause of his arrival. But now that they were vanquished in battle, they ascribed this outrage to the fury of the ungovernable multitude; begged pardon for the offence, promised to deliver hostages, and in all things to obey his commands.

Cæsar complained, that after having of their own accord sent ambassadors to the continent, with offers of peace and submission, they had nevertheless opposed his landing in such an hostile manner: but he forgave their indiscretion, and demanded a certain number of hostages; part of whom they immediately delivered, and promised to send for the rest with all convenient dispatch from the remoter provinces. Mean while they dismissed their troops, and their princes and lords assembling, recommended themselves, and their different states to the protection of Cæsar: though this submission seems to have been extorted by the necessity of the occasion; for, they afterwards renounced it with the first opportunity.

His ships  
are destroyed  
by a tempest.

Their session was not yet broke up, when the eighteen ships, with the Roman cavalry sailing from Gaul with a gentle breeze, no sooner approached the British coasts, than they were dispersed by a terrible tempest of wind blowing off the shore, and obliged to return to the port they had left, at which they arrived with great difficulty, after having narrowly escaped the horrors of shipwreck. This storm, which happened at the full moon, was attended with such an high tide, that in the night all the gallies which the Romans had hauled ashore for safety, were filled with water; while of those which rode

rode at anchor, some ran foul of one another and were destroyed, and the rest were rendered useless by the loss of their anchors, cables, masts, and rigging: a miserable spectacle to the army on shore, who could give them no assistance; and having no materials for refitting the damaged vessels, saw themselves deprived of the means of returning to Gaul, and destitute of provision on which they could subsist through the winter in Britain. Ante C. 35.

The island chiefs, who had not yet separated, resolved to take the advantage of this calamity, by which they saw the Romans dispirited; they conferred with each other upon this opportunity which fortune had put in their power; they repined at the loss of their liberty; upbraided themselves with their infamously tame submission to an handful of enemies, without cavalry, subsistence, or ships to which they might retire: they looked upon their invaders as victims devoted to destruction, and determined to sacrifice them to the genius of their country. In these sentiments they gradually disappeared from the Roman camp, and began privately to reassemble their forces; while Cæsar suspecting their design, as the natural consequence of what had happened, as also from their delaying to send in the rest of the hostages, began to make preparations for his own safety. He ordered all the corn and provision in the neighbourhood to be brought into the camp, dispatched a vessel to the continent for materials to repair the shipping; and this work his men undertook with such ardour, that in a little time the whole fleet was rendered fit for service, except twelve ships that perished in the storm.

During these transactions, the seventh legion being sent out as usual to forage, at a time when the peace lately concluded was supposed to be in full force, and the Roman camp was openly frequented by the Britons, The Britons attack the seventh legion.

Ante C. 55. Britons, the sentinels perceived a greater cloud of dust than could possibly arise from the legion that went forth, and communicated this observation to Cæsar, who immediately suspecting some new attempt of the islanders, marched out at the head of the cohorts that were upon duty, after having ordered other bands to take their station; and the rest of the army to follow him with the utmost expedition: when he had advanced a good way from the camp, he found the seventh legion hard pressed by the enemy, who concluding they would naturally come to this place, as here only the corn was not yet reaped, had formed an ambuscade in the woods, from which they suddenly fell upon the Romans, when they were dispersed and unarmed, so as to cut off a few, and disorder the rest, who could hardly resist the attacks of such a furious multitude as surrounded them; for the Britons not only showered their darts and javelins at a distance, but likewise drove among them with their chariots of war, by which they were greatly distressed. They were, therefore, very seasonably relieved by their general, at whose arrival the enemy intermitted in their action. Cæsar judging it improper to provoke them to a general engagement, kept his ground for some time, in order of battle, and then retreated to his camp, in which he was confined for several days by tempestuous weather. But, this did not hinder the Britons from dispatching messengers to all parts of the country, with accounts of the small number and dejection of the Romans, in consequence of which they assembled from different quarters to an immense number of horse and foot, and boldly advanced towards the enemy's intrenchments.

Cæsar, far from baulking their impatience, marched out to meet and give them battle, when they were quickly routed with great slaughter, and all  
their

their habitations for a considerable circuit set on fire and destroyed. That same day they sent deputies to supplicate the mercy of the Roman commander, who granted them peace, on condition that they should send to the continent double the number of the hostages he at first demanded; and now that the autumnal æquinox approached, and his ships were unfit for a winter-voyage, he forthwith re-embarked his army and returned to Gaul.

Ante C. 55.  
Cæsar returns to Gaul.

Such was the success of the first attempt the Romans made on the liberty of Britain, which was defended by the natives with all that spirit and enthusiasm which freedom and independancy inspire; and thus ended that celebrated expedition of Cæsar, which though unattended with any other solid advantage than that of making him acquainted with the coast of the island, and the temper of the inhabitants, was extolled at Rome above all the victories he had obtained over the Germans and the Gauls, and his success in Britain acknowledged by a supplication of twenty days. Although this was an extravagant and ridiculous decree of the senate, considering the little progress he had made in his first descent, it is at least a glorious testimony of the opinion which the Romans, in the meridian of all their power and glory, entertained with regard to the value of our ancestors; nevertheless we cannot assent to the overweening conjectures of those who, from an illiberal partiality to their own country, pretend, that Cæsar was actually defeated by the Britons; whereas it appears they were utterly unable to cope with him in the field, even when they had an immense superiority in point of number; that the small advantage they gained over the seventh legion was the effect of surprize; and that his sudden return to the continent in such a shattered condition, did not so much denote his apprehension of the islanders, as his dread of a winter passage in  
crazy



Ante C. 55. crazy vessels which had suffered in the storm. Had he thought himself too weak to subdue the British power by the force of his arms, he would probably have had recourse to other arts, and endeavoured to foment divisions among the different states in the land; an expedient which could hardly have miscarried, as they were ill affected to one another, and he could easily have found emissaries who would have gladly followed his instructions: it must be owned, however, that on this occasion they united for their common safety, and even the Belgian colonies acted in concert with the antient natives of the island.

Prepares for  
another de-  
scend.

The Britons no sooner saw themselves delivered from such troublesome visitants, than they seemed to forget the submissions and promises they had made, and two only of their states sent over the stipulated hostages to Cæsar, who, in all appearance, was not much incensed at their neglect, inasmuch as it furnished him with a specious pretext for returning to Britain, and reducing the whole island under the Roman dominion. Mean while, having put his army into quarters, he set out for Italy, but not before he had given orders and directions for refitting the damaged ships, and building a great number of other vessels of various construction, for the greater convenience of transporting his legions and cavalry, as well as of floating in shallow water, that they might be landed with equal ease and safety: they were broad flat-bottomed boats, managed with oars, calculated for lying close to the beach, and plying against the current of the tides. These orders being executed during the winter, under the inspection of his lieutenants; and masts, cables, anchors, and rigging, fetched from Spain, he returned to the army in Gaul, where he found six hundred transports and twenty-eight galleys ready to put to sea; and these he assembled at  
the

the port of Itium, (supposed to be Vitland,) at the distance of thirty miles from the British coast. Ante C. 55.

But, his departure was delayed by a commotion among the Triviri, who were said to have engaged with the Germans, in some intrigues against the Roman government. Reduces the Triviri. Cæsar marching into their territories, at the head of four legions and eight hundred horse, confirmed Cingetorix in the magistracy, received the submission of the state, and carried off two hundred hostages, including the sons and kindred of Idutiomarus, who was a turbulent man, and at the head of a great faction. Nor were these the only pledges he demanded for the peaceable behaviour of the Gauls in his absence: when he returned to Itium, he convened the cavalry of Gaul, and all the chiefs, except a very few in whose attachment he could confide, resolving they should accompany him in his expedition. Among these was Dumnorix the Æduan, who either dreading the dangers of the sea, or intending to raise a rebellion after Cæsar's departure, earnestly desired to be excused from the voyage, and finding Cæsar inflexible, withdrew in the night with the Æduan cavalry; but being pursued and overtaken by Cæsar's troops, he refused to return or submit; and fell fighting with great gallantry, calling aloud, with his latest breath, that he was "a free born Gaul, native of a free nation, and that he would not be enslaved."

As for the Æduan cavalry, which had accompanied him in his retreat, they returned to Cæsar, who, about the beginning of August, leaving Labienus at Itium with three legions and two thousand horse, in order to be a check upon the Gauls, and provide corn for the British expedition, set sail at sun-set with five legions, and the same number of cavalry he had left behind, his fleet consisting of eight hundred vessels; and next day at noon arrived

Makes another descent on Britain.

No. 1.

D

at

Ante C. 55. at the place of his former descent, where he landed without opposition. There was not one Briton to be seen on that part of the coast : but he afterwards understood from the prisoners, that the islanders, apprised of his intent, had assembled an army, and marched down to the sea side to oppose his disembarkation, who seeing the whole channel covered as it were with ships, they were struck with consternation, and retreated to their lurking-places.

Cæs. de  
Bell. Gallic.  
l. 5.

The army being landed, and the ground marked out for the camp, Cæsar provided himself with guides, and leaving ten cohorts and three hundred horse, under the command of Q. Atrius, to guard the ships which lay at anchor in the Downes, he began his march in quest of the Britons. Having advanced about twelve miles he came in sight of their army encamped near a river, the passage of which they disputed with their cavalry and chariots; but these being repulsed by the Romans, they retreated to a wood, in the midst of which there was a kind of fortification raised with felled timber.

Ante C. 54.

Here they posted themselves as in an impregnable fortress : but they were soon dislodged by the tenth legion, and betook themselves to flight in the utmost confusion ; though Cæsar would not allow his horse to pursue them through an unknown country, especially as the day was far advanced, and he had not yet fortified his camp at the landing-place. In the morning however, he sent detachments of cavalry and infantry in pursuit of the fugitives ; yet they were soon recalled, in consequence of a message from Q. Atrius, giving him to understand that the fleet had received great damage from a furious tempest, which had blown with such violence, that the anchors could not hold, and a number of ships were shattered and cast ashore. He forthwith marched down to the sea-side, where he learned the particulars of his loss, and found that forty ships

were



were utterly destroyed: in order to repair the rest, he called all the carpenters from the legions, and in a letter to Labienus, desired that all his workmen might be employed in building a number of new vessels. Mean while he ordered the ships to be hauled ashore, and fortified with the same trench and rampart that surrounded his camp.

This stupendous work being finished in ten days, with infinite labour, he appointed a proper guard or garrison for its defence, and put his troops again in motion against the Britons, whom he found in the same place they had before occupied, to an incredible number. By this time their common danger had induced them to forget, or at least suppress their former feuds and animosities, and unite their whole strength for the mutual defence of their liberty and possessions. They had convened a general council of all their states and dynasties, in order to deliberate on the emergency of their affairs; and foreseeing nothing but confusion and anarchy would prevail in an army composed of independent chiefs that owned no superior, and knew no subordination, they unanimously conferred a dictatorial power upon Cassivellaunus, whose territories (comprehending Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, and Bucks) were divided from the maritime states by the river Thames. This prince had been formerly engaged in continual wars with his neighbours, and acquired such reputation in military skill, that they now deemed him worthy of being invested with the sovereign command; though this was a very dangerous experiment, which nothing could justify but their dangerous situation. They had no sooner raised him to this preheminance, than they resolved to strengthen his hands with such power as should enable him to act up to the importance of his station: and immediately armed and assembled their vassals so as to compose a very numerous and formidable

The Britons  
unite under  
Cassivel-  
launus.



army, with which Cassivellaunus took possession of the post from whence the Britons had been lately dislodged.

The first act of this imperial power was to detach his cavalry and chariots to harraßs the Romans on their march; and this service they performed with great intrepidity, falling upon the enemy's horse; which however obliged them to give way and abscond among the woods and mountains, where, being acquainted with the ground, they rallied, attacked, and cut in pieces some straggling Romans, who were too eager in the pursuit. Not satisfied with having made this undaunted effort, they afterwards rushed suddenly, and unexpectedly from the woods, while the enemy were employed in fortifying their camp, and charged the grand guard with such impetuosity, that Cæsar was obliged to send a strong body to sustain them; even then the courageous Britons forced their way through the intervals of the cohorts, and cutting their passage back again, retreated to their thicket, after having killed a number of Romans, and among the rest, the tribune Quintus Laberius Durus.

Cæsar's legions, inured as they were to danger, and familiar with death, could not help manifesting their terror, at the headlong and almost irresistible attacks of the Britons, and the strange novelty in their manner of fighting, which gave them a great advantage over heavy-armed infantry, who could not pretend to pursue them when they gave way, and durst not break their ranks or abandon their standards. Nor could the Roman cavalry fight them upon equal terms; for, they frequently retreated in seeming disorder, to decoy them into the pursuit; and when they were at too great a distance from the legions to be properly sustained, they leaped from their chariots, and assailed them on foot: thus the danger was the same to the cavalry,

valry, whether they retreated or pursued. Besides, Ante C. 54. our islanders never engaged in great numbers, but fought in small bodies, disposed in distinct stations, with large intervals between them, that they might support one another occasionally, and those that were fatigued might be relieved with fresh reinforcements.

On the day after this obstinate action, they They are routed with great slaughter. shewed themselves at a distance upon the hills, without manifesting their former eagerness and alacrity in provoking the Romans to battle; but, at noon, when Cæsar detached three legions, with all the cavalry, to forage under the command of C. Trebonius; they suddenly poured upon the foragers from all quarters, and even charged the legions as they stood in order of battle; but they were immediately repulsed with great loss. They were no sooner put in disorder than the horse fell in upon them with such precipitation, as left them no time to rally, form, or avail themselves of their chariots; so that they were entirely routed with great slaughter. The auxiliaries who had joined them from different corners of the island, being dispirited by such a series of defeats, took the first opportunity of returning to their own districts; and after this period the Britons never hazarded a pitched battle with the army of Cæsar.

This politic commander, apprised of the retreat of the auxiliaries, resolved to penetrate into the confines of Cassivellaunus, by crossing the river Thames at Coway near the Oatlands, where alone Cæsar crosses the Thames and penetrates into the territories of Cassivellaunus. it was said to be fordable by infantry. When he arrived at this place, he found a great body of the Britons posted on the opposite bank, which they had fortified with sharpened palisadoes: they had likewise driven stakes of the same kind in the channel of the river so as not to appear above the surface; a circumstance of which Cæsar was inform-

Ante C. 54.

ed by the prisoners and deserters. Notwithstanding these obstructions, he ordered his horse to ford the river, and the foot to follow without loss of time. They plunged into the stream, and proceeded with such celerity, even when up to their chins in water, that the enemy being struck with consternation, could not sustain the first shock, but abandoning their works, consulted their safety in a precipitate retreat.

Cassivellaunus having by this time resigned all hope of success in regular engagements, dismissed the greatest part of his troops, retaining about four thousand charioteers, with whom he watched the motions of the Romans; and being perfectly well acquainted with the country through which they marched, attacked them occasionally, when dispersed in foraging, or intangled in woods and narrow passes, to the great danger of the cavalry, who durst not venture to reconnoitre the road, or make excursions to any distance from the legions.

While Cæsar laid waste the country with fire and sword, he received an embassy from the Trinobantes, a powerful people, inhabiting Middlesex and Essex, who promised to yield him obedience and submission, and requested that he would send their own prince Mandubratius to assume the regal authority among them, and protect him from the malice of Cassivellaunus, who had killed his father Imanuentius. The young prince had escaped his parent's fate, by flying into Gaul, and craving the protection of Cæsar, who now restored him to his subjects, after having obliged them to deliver forty hostages, and provide corn for the army\*.

Their example was immediately followed by several other states of the Belgic Britons, who seeing

\* These were the Cenimagni, Berks, Oxfordshire, Bucks, and Segontiaci, Ancalites, Bebraci, and Hertfordshire. Cassi, inhabiting Surry, Hampshire,



the Trinobantes protected from all military outrage, surrendered to the conqueror, and gave him to understand that he was but at a little distance from the chief town of Cassivellaunus, situated among woods and morasses, in which a great number of men and cattle was assembled. Thither he marched without further delay; and though he found the place strongly fortified, both by art and nature, resolved to assault it in two different quarters; but, the besieged being unable to stand the attack, betook themselves to flight from another part of the town, though numbers of them perished by the sword, and the booty fell into the hands of the Romans.

Ante C. 54.

whose capital he takes and plunders.

Cassivellaunus, thus hampered and distressed, sent orders to Cingetorix, Carnelius, Taximagulus, and Segonax, princes whose territories lay in Kent, Wilts, and Hampshire, to assemble all their forces privately, and surprise the naval camp of the Romans, while Cæsar was at too great a distance to succour the troops he had left on the seaside. But this enterprize did not succeed according to his expectation; for, when they approached the camp, the enemy made a vigorous sally, in which they killed a great number of the Britons, and took \* Cingetorix prisoner. The bad success of this attempt made a deep impression upon the mind of Cassivellaunus, who seeing his dominions

\* Otherwise called Lugotorix, prince of the river's bank, from Lug, liquor or water, Oto a bank, and Rix, a prince or general, Baxter, Gloss. antiq.

By a letter from Cicero to Atticus it appears, that Cæsar landed in Gaul on the twenty-sixth of September; so that after having refitted his ships and fortified his naval camp in Britain, he could not have above twenty days' rest for his expedition against Cassivellaunus,

whose territories were bounded by the Thames, at the distance of eighty miles from the sea, where the Romans landed. Cæsar seems to have marched by Lenham, Maidstone, Kestonheath, and Woodcoate, to Oatlands, and Coway-stakes, where he passed the river; and from thence he proceeded through the western parts of Middlesex to Verulam, or St. Albans, near which Cassivellaunus submitted.



Ante C. 54. ravaged, his allies deserting his cause, and his troops altogether unable to cope with such a powerful enemy, by whom he had been so often defeated, he began to think, in good earnest of submitting to the conqueror, to whom he communicated proposals of peace by means of Comius the Atrebatian.

Makes peace  
with the  
British king.

Cæsar, being resolved to pass the winter on the continent, that he might be at hand to watch, and suppress the sudden commotions of Gaul; and the summer being already almost elapsed, condescended to give peace to this British prince, after having exacted a number of hostages, imposed a certain annual tribute to be paid by Britain to the Roman people, and laid strong injunctions on Cassivellaunus, to live in peace and friendship with Mandubratius and the Trinobantes. Peace being thus re-established, he marched back with his hostages and a great number of prisoners to the sea-side, where he ordered his ships to be launched; and his army being put on board at too different embarkations, landed safely on the continent a few days before the autumnal æquinox.

Cæsar de  
Bello Galli-  
co, l. 5.  
Strabo, l. 4.  
Dio. l. 39.  
Sueton. in  
vit. Cæs.

As he left no garrison and made no settlement in Britain, in all probability the nations never paid the tribute stipulated in the pacification with Cassivellaunus; or at least it may be supposed that article was rejected by all the inhabitants, except the Belgic colonies, whose chief dependance being on trade, they durst not refuse to pay the imposition, lest their merchandize should be seized by the Romans; so that it seems to have been rather a duty on commodities than a general tribute, with which the natives could not be saddled by any treaty with Cassivellaunus, whose sovereignty many states no longer acknowledged. Cæsar therefore reaped no other fruit from this conquest, than the glory of having carried the Roman arms beyond the ocean,  
into

into a country which was considered as an unknown land, divided in a manner from the whole world; unless we reckon, among the advantages accruing from this enterprize, a corslet of British pearls, which he dedicated as an offering at the temple of Venus Genetrix, the supposed author of his family, and a long train of captives whom he employed about the scenes and tapestry of the theatre, on which his British achievements were represented\*. Whether or not the Britons were punctual in fulfilling their engagements with Cæsar, cannot be determined from history; but probably the maritime settlements were regular in their payment of the tribute, which for that reason we may suppose to have been easily raised; for after the death of Julius Cæsar, the Britons lived in great tranquility, without feeling the rod of arbitrary power, or the oppressive impositions of avaricious proconsuls, during the reigns of Augustus and his successor. Not but that the former in the sixth year of his imperial dignity, when he crossed the Alps to regulate the tribute imposed upon the several nations of Gaul, formed the design of an expedition into Britain, with a view of subjecting the natives to the same regulations: but, the chiefs of the island being informed of his intent, found means to divert the storm, by sending a solemn embassy to sue for peace, and present oblations to the capitol. The emperor having revolved the expence of such

\* The British slaves were also employed in carrying the emperor's sedan, as appears by an old inscription in the gardens of Cardinal Carpenso.

That the Romans did not look upon Cæsar's enterprize as an absolute conquest of Britain, we learn from authors of the best authority. Tacitus says he did not conquer Britain, but only shewed it to the

Romans.—Horace in the time of Augustus calls them *Invictos Romanos* *no Marte*; and Lucan, who was indeed a professed enemy to Julius Cæsar, scruples not to affirm, that he turned tail, in a fright, to the Britons, in quest of whom he went with such mighty preparations. *Territa quæstus ostendit terga Britannis.*

Ante C. 54. an enterprize, judged it impolitic to exhaust so much treasure in the conquest of a remote people, who could never be in a capacity to attack the Romans in their own territories; especially as they already received greater sums from the duties laid upon British merchandize, than they could expect from a general tribute, after deducting the expence of troops and garrisons, which would in that case become necessary.

The Britons cultivate a peaceable correspondence with the Romans.

Strabo, l. 2.

In consequence of these pacific maxims, the Britons lived in harmony with the Romans; and in the reign of Tiberius, when the fleet of Germanicus was dispersed in the German ocean, after his victory over Arminius, and a number of his ships were wrecked on the coasts of Britain, or forced to take shelter in the creeks and harbours of this island; the reguli or chiefs assisted, and relieved the distressed Romans with the utmost hospitality, and sent them back in safety to their general. These friendly dispositions were improved by a frequent intercourse between Britain and Rome, to which the British noblemen often resorted; and some of these for the benefit of education. The Roman merchants residing in Britain together with the publicans and collectors of the revenue, soon grew familiarised to the temper, genius, and customs of the inhabitants, and enjoyed all the opportunities they could desire of making themselves acquainted with the nature and situation of the country, as well as with the strength, interests, dissensions, and political views of the different tribes, that possessed the island. Thus the Romans became insensibly masters of Britain in speculation, and began to wonder that a country so well known, had not yet been reduced into a province: the interests of the state gave way to the prospect of ambition; and though they already enjoyed all the solid and truly desirable advantages of a conquest, in the voluntary and



and pacific submission of the natives, the epithet of Britannicus had irresistible charms in the eyes of a weak, vain, arrogant, and worthless emperor, such as Caius Caligula, who, in the extravagance of a freak, resolved to invade Britain, and restore a prince of that island called Adminius, who had been expelled by his own father, and fled for refuge to Rome. That the reader may the more distinctly understand this transaction, it will be necessary to explain the particulars of this expulsion. Cunobelin, the successor of Cassivellaunus, who lived in good correspondence with the Romans, and paid the tribute punctually, in pieces of coin struck for that purpose, and inscribed with the word Tascia, extended his dominion over the Dobuni, inhabiting Gloucestershire and Oxfordshire, and the Trinovantes, whose capital was, according to Ptolemy, called Camelodunum; besides these he conquered several other tribes, and acquired such accession of territory, as rendered him the most powerful prince in the island. He had many sons, three of whom are mentioned by the Roman historians, under the names of Adminius, Caratacus, and Togodumnus; and the first of these being appointed to preside over the Trinovantes, even in the life-time of Cunobelin, misbehaved in such a manner, in the administration of his province, that he was deposed, and exiled by his own father, from whose severity he appealed to Caligula, and persuaded that vain-glorious emperor to undertake the entire conquest of Britain.

An. Ch. 16.

Caligula undertakes the conquest of Britain.

Camden.

Sueton.

His ridiculous expedition to the sea-side.

For this purpose he assembled an army of two hundred thousand fighting men, and marched into Germany against some of the states of that country, which he proposed to subdue before he should embark for Britain, he repassed the Rhine without having seen the face of an enemy: then he plundered Gaul, and directed his march to the sea-side, where

An. Ch. 16. where he ordered his forces to be drawn up in order of battle. While they stood in this posture, he took the air upon the sea in a galley, and at his landing ordered a charge to be sounded, and the signal to be made for engaging; but, no enemy appearing, he commanded the soldiers to gather cockle-shells, which were sent with great solemnity to Rome, as the spoils of the ocean, and served to adorn the ridiculous triumph which a servile senate decreed §.

Perhaps the ardour with which this cowardly emperor at first formed the resolution of conquering Britain, was effectually cooled by the account he heard of the preparations which the islanders had made for his reception: certain it is, the pusillanimous conduct he manifested on this occasion when at the head of such an immense army, brought the Roman power into contempt with the warlike Britons; and this begat a careless security, in the midst of which they were surprised and enslaved by Claudius, after they had preserved their liberty above ninety years, during the reigns of the first four emperors. In this period, however, they did not enjoy that tranquility which they might have derived from the forbearance of the Romans; on the contrary, it afforded leisure and opportunity to the different states and chieftains to renew their former bickerings, and enable the more powerful potentates to subdue the petty sovereignties that lay contiguous to their dominions.

We have already observed that the Cattivellauni, a warlike clan of the antient inhabitants, had greatly extended their sway over the Belgic-Britons, who

§ Besides this extravagant and despicable parade, his army was employed in nothing while he tarried on the coast, except in building a watch-tower or light-house as a beacon for ships at sea; its first name *Turris ordens* was by the people of the country corrupted into *Tour ordans*, or *Tour d'ordre*; and Charlemagne repaired the building, which still remains a noble monument of Roman antiquity. Buckler de Belg. l. 4.

were

were perhaps enervated by their correspondence with the nations of the continent; particularly with the Romans, who bought up their commodities, and contributed more than all the rest of the world to the support of their trade, which they found too comfortable and advantageous to be risqued in favour of a starving independency.

These intestine divisions rendered Britain an easy conquest to such a powerful people as the Romans, who had long ago converted Gaul into a province and thereby facilitated the expedition into this island, which nevertheless might have been postponed to a succeeding reign, considering the indolence and phlegmatic disposition of Claudius, had not he been roused and stimulated by the exhortations and importunities of a British fugitive, of the name of Beric, a chieftain among the Dobuni of Dorsetshire. This prince had been vanquished and expelled by Caratacus and Togodumnus, who now ruled the Cattivellauni, as successors of their deceased father Cunobelin.

Claudius stimulated to the conquest of Britain by Beric, a British fugitive.

Claudius, thus daily instigated by the remonstrances of the British exile, reinforced by his favourites, who flattered him with the prospects of laurels and triumphs, resolved to send over an army under the command of A. Plautius, a person of senatorial dignity, and of great experience and military skill. This officer was accordingly provided with troops and instructions, and set out on this important expedition. But, when he arrived at the sea-side, his soldiers refused to embark for an island which they considered as another distinct world; and this refusal, which seemed at first so unpromising, contributed in the event to the success of the enterprize: for the Britons, being informed of the mutiny, intermitted in the measures they were taking to defend the coast; and afterwards, when the army of Plautius submitted of their own accord

Claudius sends A. Plautius with an army into Britain.

to



An. Ch. 16. to the orders of their general, they made a descent on the island without opposition.

Caratacus and Togodumnus, foreseeing the insinuations of Beric at the court of Rome, had sent thither ambassadors to justify their conduct, and desire that fugitive might be sent back, in order to be punished for his perfidy and rebellion: but, he had anticipated their resentment, and so artfully ingratiated himself with the emperor, that Claudius treated the deputies with insolence and disdain, refused to deliver the Dobunian, and in his turn demanded the arrears of the tributes imposed by Julius Cæsar, which the Cattivellaunians had neglected to pay. This arrogant behaviour towards the ambassadors, incensed Caratacus and his brother to such a degree, that they not only rejected his proposal about the tribute, but likewise ordered their subjects, on pain of incurring the severest penalties, to break off all correspondence with the Romans.

In consequence of such an open rupture, they naturally expected an invasion, and made preparations accordingly, which were now frustrated by their confidence in the mutiny of the Roman army which was remarkably obstinate and audacious; for, trusting to this obstruction, which they deemed insurmountable, the two British kings had withdrawn their forces into the interior parts of their dominions, leaving the coast open and defenceless.

Baxt. Gloss.  
Brit.

He pursues  
the Britons,  
passes the  
Thames,  
and defeats  
Caratacus,  
and his brother  
Togodumnus in  
three successive battles.

Plautius, having landed in Kent, advanced by the same route which Cæsar had formerly taken, until he reached the Thames, which he passed at Wallingford; and in Oxfordshire engaged both the brothers, whom he defeated in two pitched battles. These victories were attended with the submission of the Dobuni, among whom having left a garrison at Aldchester, he marched in pursuit of the Britons, who had retired behind the river Thames, which they deemed impassable. A party of Germans,

however,

however, swam across in their armour; and these were followed by a detachment of Romans, under the command of Fl. Vespasian, afterwards emperor, and his brother Sabinus, who fell upon the Britons with great fury, and obliged them to retreat, after having killed a great number of their horse and charioteers. Far from being dispirited by this check, they next day charged the Romans with such intrepidity, that the victory continued for a long time doubtful, and was at last wrested from the Britons by the bravery of G. Sidius Gæta, who, for his extraordinary prowess on this occasion, was complimented by the senate with the honours of a petty triumph, although he was an inferior officer. Caratacus, after this unsuccessful effort, retreated along the river Thames, as it runs towards the ocean: and crossed at a particular place, where it had overflowed its banks, and left behind a quantity of stagnating water. Here the Germans swam over as before; and Plautius passing with his legions at a bridge in the neighbourhood, a battle ensued, in which Togodumnus was slain, and the Britons routed with great slaughter †.

An. Ch. 16.

Dio. l. 65.

Plautius having obtained four successive victories over the enemy, thought it was now high time to give the emperor notice of his proceedings, according to the instructions he had received, that he might have the honour of putting an end to the war in person. Claudius immediately embarked at Ostium in the latter end of July, for Marseilles, from whence he travelled by land to Boulogne, then known by the name of Gesoriacum, where he took shipping for the British coast, with a very considerable reinforcement, and landed safely at the Portus Rotupinus, now called Sandwich.

Claudius arrives in Britain.

† This event is supposed to have happened near the place now called the Isle of Dogs, almost opposite to Greenwich, because the river is there fordable, and at no other place between that and the sea.

The

An. Ch. 16.

takes Ca-  
melodu-  
num,reduces ma-  
ny petty  
states to his  
obedience,is three  
times pro-  
claimed Im-  
perator by  
his army,  
and returns  
to Rome,Suet. Claud.  
Dio. Cass.  
An. Ch. 43.

The soldiers were no sooner disembarked, than he proceeded to the banks of the Thames, on which Plautius was encamped; and the armies being joined, crossed the river in the face of the Britons, who bravely disputed their passage. From hence the emperor advanced into the country of the Trinobantes, and took the capital Camelodunum, now called Malden in Essex.

The fame of these exploits, and the terror of such a numerous army, brought nations every day to his camp, with offers of submission, especially from the Belgic-Britons of that neighbourhood; but none of the antient natives would give up their liberty, though the Iceni courted his friendship and were considered as allies: while Caratacus at the head of the Cassivellauni, still kept the field in hope of seeing the Romans retire at the approach of winter.

Claudius, having disarmed those that submitted, and reduced many petty states to his obedience by force of arms, was several times proclaimed Imperator by the soldiers, and the vanquished were so touched with his generosity in leaving them to enjoy their possessions, that they erected temples to him, and ranked him among their deities. Thus satiated with glory and success, he left Plautius to finish the campaign, after he had stayed fifteen days in Britain, and at his return to Rome was honoured with a triumph and the surname of Brittannicus: circumstances that clearly demonstrate the importance of such an accession to the Roman dominion †.

Plautius, in the character of proconsul or governor of Britain, proceeded in the conquest of those

† About this period the islands of Orkneys were likewise added to the empire, by whom is uncertain; but the event is particularly cele-

brated in an inscription dedicated to the honour of Claudius Britannicus Romana, p. 21.



states who still refused to submit: and while he himself carried on his operations chiefly against the inland, warlike, and original islanders, who lived among woods and mountains, Fl. Vespasian his second or assessor was employed to reduce the maritime places occupied by the colonies of the Belgæ, who had settled the whole coast from the promontory of Kent to the Lands-end. The success of this expedition was such as might have been expected from the fortune, valour, and capacity of such an experienced general. He defeated them in thirty battles, made himself master of the isle of Wight, and subdued Hampshire, Wiltshire, and Somersetshire \*, to the extremity of Cornwall; and in the course of this expedition, subjected the Belgæ and Durotriges, two of the most powerful British nations, who had adopted the manners of the old Britons, and lived among the woods and marshes of Wilts, Dorsetshire, and the Mendip-hills: where their youth were inured to hardship, in feeding, tending, and driving their cattle among the downs and forests: an honourable society of herdsmen distinguished by the name of Ceangi or Drovers. These and many other states were entirely reduced by the courage and sagacity of Vespasian, who, at his return to Rome, was honoured with the consulate and a triumph.

An. Ch. 43.

Vespasian  
signalizes  
himself in  
the con-  
quest of di-  
vers British  
nations.

Camden's  
Somerset.

An. Ch. 51.

As for Plautius, he had to deal with † Caratacus, who was a prince of uncommon talents. He

\* The many Roman encampments still to be seen in the counties of Wilts, Dorset, and Somersetshire, seem to be monuments of Vespasian's military glory, and some of them are actually declared by tradition to be the works of that general.-----With respect to the story of his having been rescued by the gallantry of his son Titus, when he was surrounded by the enemy

in Britain, it must be a fable or mistake, inasmuch as Titus, who was born in the year forty-one, could not be above the age of seven or eight, at the period fixed for this noble act of filial piety. Carte, p. 103.

† His British name was Caradoc or Garatog, perhaps from Gearact, wife; and Tog, a general.

An. Ch. 51. was endowed with the most undaunted courage, and the most invincible fortitude; he was fraught with experience, which had ripened his judgment; patient in adversity; cool, penetrating, and fruitful of expedients. Finding it impracticable to withstand the arms and military discipline of the Romans in battle, he resolved to hazard nothing but skirmishes, and these only when he had a manifest advantage of ground, or a great superiority in number: thus he still hovered about the skirts of the Roman army, which he occasionally harassed with great success; and his parties, when overmatched, retreated to mountains, fens, and fastnesses, unknown and inaccessible to the enemy. Nevertheless, Plautius, by his vigilance, activity, and conduct, subdued the Dobuni, Ancalites, and Trinobantes, of Gloucestershire, Oxfordshire, Middlesex, and Essex; and, when he returned to Rome, enjoyed the honours of an ovation.

Plautius  
subdues the  
Dobuni,  
and other  
warlike  
states.

An. Ch. 52.

Dio. l. lx.

Seut. Claud.

He is suc-

ceeded in

command

by P. Osto-

rius Sca-

pula,

who settles

a colony at

Camalodu-

num.

After his departure, the war was probably managed by the legates of the legions, for the space of two years that intervened between the return of Plautius, and the arrival of P. Ostorius Scapula, an active and experienced general, who was sent over to the government of Britain, and found the affairs of his province in great confusion. Though the season for action was almost elapsed, yet, as the troops of Caratacus made continual incursions into the Roman province, in hope that the new governor would not expose himself in a strange country to the inconveniences of a winter campaign, he forthwith assembled his troops, and taking the field against them, defeated all those that hazarded an encounter. Then, with a view to defend the province from the continual insults to which it was exposed from such restless neighbours, he resolved to confine and restrain them by a chain of forts to be raised along the river Anton or Nen, in

Nor-

Northamptonshire, and on the banks of the Severne; but before he began to execute this resolution, he established a Roman colony at Camulodunum or Malden; and London being settled much about the same time, the country between the Thames and the sea was reduced into a province, under the name of Britannia prima. An. Ch. 52.

The Iceni, inhabiting Norfolk, Suffolk, and Cambridgeshire, a powerful people, who had hitherto lived in amity with the Romans, were the first to oppose the design of the proconsul. They engaged in a confederacy with some of the neighbouring states; and joining their forces, took possession of an advantageous post, which they fortified with loose flints for annoying the feet of the Roman cavalry: notwithstanding this precaution, they were attacked by Ostorius, and their intrenchments forced, after they had made a desperate resistance. He defeats the Iceni. Tacit. Ann. xii.

After this victory he took measures for securing the province from any future incursions of those nations; and, in order to defend the Roman conquests on the side of the Severne, he allowed Cogidunus, king of the Dobuni, possessing the counties of Gloucester and Oxford, to keep his principality, and even invested him with authority over some other Belgic colonies: a politic expedient, which succeeded to his wish, by fomenting the dissensions among the Britons, and attaching a powerful prince to the Roman interest, which he never abandoned in the sequel.

Ostorius, having made these prudent dispositions, marched into the country of the Canges or Shropshire, which he ravaged with fire and sword, and penetrated almost to the sea-coast of Denbighshire, when he was recalled by the revolt of the Brigantes in Yorkshire, whither he marched with great expedition; and having quelled the disturbance,



An. Ch. 52.

punished the ringleaders of the insurrection with death \*.

These examples of severity had no effect upon the Silures, inhabiting Herefordshire and great part of South-Wales, the most powerful nation in the island, commanded by their king Caratacus, reckoned the most martial prince that Britain had ever produced. He retired to the Severne with the remains of his own forces, which he had so long employed unsuccessfully against the invaders of his country; and found no great difficulty in persuading the inhabitants to try their fortune in the same interesting quarrel.

Marches against Caratacus,

Ostorius, being apprized of their strength, thought proper to employ his legions in this expedition; and immediately began his march throughout Shropshire, in order to attack them at once, and terminate the war by one decisive blow. Caratacus, unwilling to bring the war into the country of the Silures, passed the river Teme, that divides Herefordshire from Shropshire; and being reinforced by a body of the Ordovices from different parts of Wales, took possession of a very advantageous post, upon an inaccessible mountain, washed by a deep and rapid stream †.

who is defeated.

When he saw the enemy approaching, he drew up his army, composed of different tribes, com-

\* This insurrection was not quelled before Ostorius had routed the Brigantes in the field. There is a Roman encampment still visible on a moor between Littleborough and Doncaster, near Hatfield forest, from which the troops of the Brigantes sallied upon the Romans, and a battle ensued on the spot, where now stands the town of Ostorfield, so denominated from the general who obtained the victory. Phil. Trans. n. 275.

† In all probability the Colun or Clun that falls into the Teme, hard by a very steep hill, called at this day Caer-Caradoc, on the top of which are the remains of a camp, surrounded with stone ramparts, though now covered with earth. The Roman Tumuli are still visible on the Shropshire side of the Teme, and the British camp is on the Herefordshire side of that river. Camden's Shropshire.

manded

manded by their own respective chieftains; and going in person from rank to rank, exhorted them to exert their utmost courage and resolution, inasmuch as their liberty and happiness depended upon the fortune of the day. To these remonstrances they replied with joyous shouts and acclamations; which did not fail to startle Ostorius, who began to think that the nature of their situation, the river that ran in their front, and their eagerness and alacrity to engage, were obstacles not to be surmounted. Encouraged, however, by the ardour of his troops, who called aloud that nothing was impossible to Roman courage, he gave the signal for the attack, in consequence of which they sprung forward with the utmost intrepidity. The river was soon passed; but, in approaching the British camp, they received a shower of javelins and other missiles, which brought a number of the Romans to the ground. Notwithstanding this terrible discharge, they advanced to the rampart, which being composed of loose stones, was easily demolished in several places: as soon as they had an opportunity of using their swords, such carnage ensued, that the Britons were totally routed; and their defeat was the more severely felt, as the wife, daughters, and brothers of Caratacus fell into the hands of the conqueror. This victory was followed in a few days with an advantage which Ostorius could not foresee: Caratacus himself, who had fled for refuge to Cartimandua, queen of the Brigantes, was delivered into his hands by that princess, because she dreaded the resentment of the victor, in case she should grant an asylum to the vanquished king.

betrayed  
and sent  
captive to  
Rome.

Thus was the gallant Caratacus treacherously surrendered to the Roman general, after he had commanded the confederate Britons for nine years successively, during which he had made such incredible efforts to maintain the liberty of his coun-

An. Ch. 52. try, against officers and armies inured to conquest, that his renown had long ago reached the city of Rome, where his name was equally dreaded and revered.

Claudius was no sooner informed of his being taken, than he ordered him to be conducted to his court, in order to exhibit him as a spectacle to the Roman people. Accordingly, on the day appointed for that purpose, the emperor ascended his throne in public, and commanded the captives to be brought into his presence. First appeared the vassals of the British king, with the trappings and spoils of the war; these were followed by his wife, brothers, and daughters, imploring mercy with the most piteous and abject lamentations; last of all came Caratacus, with a dignified aspect, betraying neither fear nor perplexity in his countenance; but, approaching the tribunal, he fixed his eyes on Claudius, and is said to have spoke to this effect.

His address  
to the em-  
peror.

“ Had my moderation been equal to my birth and  
“ fortune, I had arrived in this city, not a cap-  
“ tive, but an ally; nor wouldst thou have dis-  
“ dained the alliance of a prince, like me, de-  
“ scended from illustrious progenitors, and vested  
“ with the supreme authority over many warlike  
“ nations. My present fate redounds as much to  
“ thy honour as to my own disgrace. I was in  
“ possession of vassals, horses, arms, and wealth;  
“ what wonder then that I was unwilling to lose  
“ them? for though you are ambitious of univer-  
“ sal sway, it does not follow that all men ought  
“ tamely to submit to your dominion. Had I  
“ surrendered myself in the beginning of the con-  
“ test, neither my misfortune, nor thy glory,  
“ would have attracted the attention of the world,  
“ and my fate would have been buried in oblivion.  
“ But if thou wilt spare my life, I shall be an  
“ eternal monument of thy clemency.” The em-



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C. Grignon sculp.

*The Noble Behaviour of the British King Caractacus  
before the Emperor Claudius at Rome.*

peror was affected with this address of the British hero, whom he pardoned on the spot; and ordering the captives to be unchained, the first use they made of their liberty was to go and prostrate themselves before the empress Agrippina, who sat enthroned in the same place, and was supposed to have interceded with Claudius in their behalf. The conquest and captivity of Caratacus was extolled as highly at Rome as that of Syphax by P. Scipio, and that of Perseus by L. Paulus; and the senate decreed the honours of a triumph to Ostorius, whose fortune seemed to forsake him in the sequel: for whether the Roman troops in Britain became more secure and negligent, after the reduction of Caratacus, or the Britons acquired redoubled courage and activity from resentment and despair, they now gained several advantages over the enemy; they suddenly fell upon a Roman quarter-master general, who had been left with a body of troops to build forts in the country of the Silures, and cut him in pieces, together with eight centurions, and a number of legionary soldiers; on which occasion all the cohorts would have met with the same fate, had not they been sustained by succours from the nearest stations. In a little time after this exploit, they defeated the foragers and their convoy of cavalry; nay, when Ostorius came up in person with the legions, they maintained the battle till night, and then retired.

These actions were followed by innumerable skirmishes, fought in woods and morasses with various success; for they took all opportunities of falling upon straggling parties of the Romans, against whom the Silures glowed with the most implacable revenge, in consequence of having heard that the emperor declared the Britons would never be quiet, until the Silures should undergo the fate of the Sigambri, in being extirpated from their

An. Ch. 53. own country, and transported to Gaul. Exasperated at this declaration, they redoubled their hostilities; they intercepted two auxiliary cohorts that were busied in pillaging for the benefit of their officers, and by distributing the booty and the captives among the neighbouring nations, paved the way for a general revolt; when Ostorius died, oppressed with cares and disappointment. The Britons rejoiced at this event, by which they were freed from a vigilant enemy, who, though not killed in battle, they justly supposed owed his death to the war, which he found himself unable to conclude.

Ostorius  
dies in Bri-  
tain.

and is suc-  
ceeded by  
Aulus Di-  
dius.

Considering the precarious and unsettled condition of the Roman province in Britain, this was no time to leave the army without a general; so that Claudius sent thither Aulus Didius, without delay, as proprætor; and notwithstanding all his dispatch, he found affairs in a worse situation than ever, as the Silures had obtained a victory over a legion commanded by Manlius Valens, and elated by this advantage, made incursions into the Roman province: however, this loss was, in all probability, exaggerated by the new general, with a view to enhance the merit of his checking the career of the enemy, whom he compelled to retire.

Venutius  
marries  
Cartisman-  
dua, and  
breaks with  
the Ro-  
mans.

Mean while Venutius, prince of the Uicci, or Vigantes, inhabiting the counties of Warwick and Worcester, a general of distinguished abilities among the Britons, and formerly attached to the Romans, having married Cartismandua, that perfidious queen of the Brigantes, who had betrayed Caratacus; their union was attended with disgust and animosity, which proceeded to a separation and open rupture. A war ensued between the husband and the wife, in the course of which she inveigled his brother and kindred into her power by a fresh act of treachery, which was so flagrant and inexcusable



cusable as to excite the resentment of the neighbouring states, some of whom reinforced the party of Venutius. In order to counterballance this junction, Cartismandua had recourse to the Romans, whom she had so signally obliged; and Aulus Didius being too old or inactive to take the field in person, or unwilling to risque the reputation he had already acquired, sent some cohorts to her succour, and to their valour she owed the fortune of the day; nor had she less cause to congratulate herself upon the assistance of a legion commanded by Cestius Nasica, which afterwards fought another battle in her favour.

An. Ch. 53.

Tacit Ann.  
l. xii.

Elated with the friendship of the Romans, or impatient to gratify an irregular passion, which perhaps was the cause of her aversion to Venutius, she espoused her own general Vellocatus; an indiscretion which alienated the minds of her subjects to such a degree, that Venutius profited by their dissatisfaction so as to make himself master of a great part of her territories; and though the Romans marched to her succour on the first notice, all they could do was to save her person from captivity; while, in espousing her cause, they converted a serviceable friend into an irreconcilable enemy, and entailed a dangerous war upon the empire.

Didius was succeeded in the government of Britain by Veranius, under the empire of Nero, and meditated mighty projects, which, as he had acquired great reputation in other employments, would probably have succeeded, had they not been anticipated by his death, which happened before he had time to undertake any enterprize of consequence. This officer's place was filled by Suetonius Paulinus, one of the greatest generals of his time, the first Roman who had passed mount Atlas, and penetrated with an army to the banks of the Niger.

Suetonius  
Paulinus  
takes the  
command  
in Britain.

An. Ch. 53. **Niger.** He glowed with emulation to rival the fame of Corbulo, the conqueror of Armenia, whose glory he resolved to eclipse by his achievements in Britain. As soon as he arrived in his government, he formed the design of reducing the isle of Mona or Anglesey, separated from the rest of Britain by a narrow channel, over which he transported his infantry in flat-bottomed boats\*, while his cavalry, partly wading and partly swimming, easily surmounted this obstruction. He found the islanders drawn up in order of battle on the shore, to oppose his landing; and saw a number of women, dressed like furies, with dishevelled hair, and torches in their hands, surrounded by Druids, who lifted up their hands to heaven, and poured forth the most terrible execrations. Such a spectacle at first confounded the Romans, and fixed them motionless to the spot, when they received the first assault without opposition; but at length the shame of being terrified by a troop of weak women and priests, together with the exhortations of their general, dispelled the suggestions of their fear, and then charging the Britons sword in hand, they soon made themselves masters of the island. The first use Suetonius made of his victory, was to burn the Druids in the fires which they themselves had kindled for the sacrifice of their prisoners; and in detestation of their barbarities peculiar to the Druidical superstition, he ordered their altars to be demolished, and their sacred groves to be cut down, that no memorial might remain of such an execrable religion. The remnant of the Druids finding them-

conquers  
the island of  
Anglesey,

and exter-  
minates the  
Druids.

\* The tradition of the country fixes the place near Porthamel in the parish of Llanidan, where the channel is very narrow; and the Welsh names of the landing-place and the field of battle still preserve a memorial of the transaction. Besides,

this tradition is confirmed by the remains of a Roman camp, a large tumulus, British weapons, bones, ashes, and coins of Claudius found in this particular place. Camden's Anglesey.

selves deprived of their ceremonies and habitations, and moreover exposed to continual dangers from the aversion of the Romans, retired to Ireland and the Hebrides, which are supposed to have been the original seats of their worship, while the proprætor began to build forts for the preservation of the island he had conquered.

This work however was soon interrupted by an unexpected incident. He was recalled to quell a general insurrection of the Britons, in which not only the subjects, but also the allies of the Romans had joined the other nations that were not subjected to their sway. This revolt was undoubtedly ripened by the sense of the grievances under which the Britons groaned. They had not only lost their ancient independency, and form of government, which was so dear to their remembrance, but they were saddled with cruel taxes, which they borrowed money of the Romans themselves to pay; and if they failed to reimburse those usurers with the utmost punctuality, their cattle and goods were seized, and themselves expelled their habitations\*. Nay, their misery became the subject of ridicule to their oppressors, who insulted them on all occasions, so as to kindle a desperate spirit of resentment in a people naturally addicted to passion and revenge. Their minds being thus prepared, nothing was wanting but some remarkable outrage, to blow the embers into a dangerous flame of open rebellion; and such a provoking act of violence they now sustained on the following occasion.

Prasatagus, king of the Iceni, lately deceased, had by his will bequeathed his estate, as a joint inheritance between the emperor and his own daughters,

He is called from thence by a general revolt of the Britons.

\* We are told by Dio Cassius, that Seneca lent incredible sums at extravagant interest to those poor people; and, upon their failure in point of payment, proceeded to such extremities as in a great measure contributed to this revolt.



An. Ch. 61.

ters, in hope that by the sacrifice of one part, he might secure the other to his family : but this precaution, instead of answering the end for which it was taken, had a quite contrary effect ; for the ceremonies of the funeral were no sooner performed, than Catus Decianus, the procurator of the province, took possession of the whole, on pretence of executing the testament of the defunct ; and the widow Bonduica making remonstrances against this act of injustice, he ordered her to be scourged like a slave, and violated the chastity of her daughters : the kindred of Prasatagus were treated like slaves, his houses seized, his principalities wasted, and the nobility or chieftains turned out of their paternal estates.

Tacit. Vit.  
Agric. Dio.  
Cassius.

These shocking barbarities, added to the other motives of discontent, exaggerated by the dowager, who was a woman of a masculine spirit and irresistible eloquence, and inflamed by the remaining Druids, who had such influence over all the island, produced an universal revolt. The Iceni, as being the most deeply interested in the quarrel, were the first who declared themselves openly ; and their example was immediately followed by their neighbours, the Trinobantes. Venutius was the next to join the malcontents ; the partizans of his wife, forgetting their particular quarrels, and former amity with the Romans, united with their countrymen on this occasion : all the subjected states, and even the remote Caledonians, engaged in this confederacy ; which was headed by Bonduica, who soon found her army increased to two hundred and thirty thousand fighting men ; such a prodigious number as they had never brought into the field upon any former emergency.

The Britons  
destroy the  
colony at  
Camulodunum, under  
the direction of Bon-  
duica.

The Roman colony at Camulodunum was surprised and put to the sword ; the temple of Claudius plundered and burnt ; the whole infantry of the

the ninth legion, commanded by Petilius Cerealis, An. Ch. 61. surrounded and cut in pieces; and no enemy being able to keep the field against those exasperated enthusiasts, they ravaged the whole country that was subject to the Romans, burning, crucifying, and impaling the wretched people, without distinction of age or sex: they destroyed Verolam, which was a Roman municipium, though not fortified, and returned loaded with booty to their different habitations, after having sacrificed above seventy thousand lives in this expedition.

Suetonius, being informed of this rebellion, quitted his designs in the isle of Anglesey, and marching with his small body of forces through the enemy's country, arrived in safety at London, which was already famous for its wealth and commerce: there being furnished with provision and stores by the Belgic colonies inhabiting the country to the south and west of the Thames, who still adhered to the Roman interest, he drew together the auxiliary cohorts from the neighbouring garrisons that were not tenable; and though Pænius Posthumius, præfect of the second legion, refused to march to his assistance, these draughts, joined with the fourteenth legion and the vexillarii of the twentieth, composed a body of ten thousand men, with which he resolved to take the field, and hazard a general engagement.

With this view he encamped in an advantageous situation, and drawing up his forces in order of battle on a narrow spot of ground, with a thick impenetrable wood in his rear, and a large open plain in front, he waited with great composure for the attack of the enemy, his legionary soldiers being stationed in the center, flanked on the right and left by the light armed troops, and the wings being formed by the cavalry. The Britons, elated with the advantages they had lately gained, and confiding

The Britons are totally defeated.

An. Ch. 61. in the vast superiority of their number, after having been harrangued by Bonduica\*, who appeared among them in a chariot with her two daughters who had been deflowered, proceeded to the attack with loud shouts and acclamations; and the Romans sustained the first charge without shrinking. Nay, they gave them such a warm reception as checked their impetuosity; and having expended all their javelins, sallied out in form of a wedge, in order to penetrate the more easily through such an enormous multitude. The Britons fought with great obstinacy and perseverance, though without order or distinction; but at length were obliged to yield to the discipline and valour of their enemies, who routed them with great slaughter. Their loss amounted to eighty thousand killed in the battle and in the pursuit, besides an infinite number of captives doomed to perpetual slavery; for they had, according to custom, brought their women into the field, and disposed them in waggons ranged around the plain, from whence they could see the engagement, and animate the men to deeds of glory. Far from being disheartened by such a terrible defeat, they prepared for another battle, but were diverted from this resolution by the sudden death of Bonduica, occasioned by the violence of her grief and

\* Bonduica is represented as a tall woman, of remarkable beauty, and the most dignified deportment, with a commanding severity in her countenance, a loud shrill voice, and a great quantity of yellow hair that flowed down to her loins. She wore a massy golden chain about her neck, a flowing robe of various colours, over which was thrown a mantle of coarser stuff. She held a spear in her hand, and from a throne of turf harrangued her army, recapitulating the wrongs they had

suffered from the Romans, reminding them of the bravery of their ancestors, expatiating upon their late success against their oppressors, and exhorting them to the defence of their liberty, rather than live and undergo the misery and disgrace of servitude. Having thus inflamed their courage, she let loose a hare which she had concealed in her bosom, and gave thanks aloud for that happy omen to Adraffe, the goddess of war, Dio. l. 62.

despair,



despair, procured, as some alledge, by poison. An. Ch. 61.  
 This calamity disconcerted all their measures, and Dio. l. 62.  
 after having celebrated her funeral obsequies, they Tacit. Vit.  
 immediately dispersed into their several districts; Agriool.  
 while Pænius Posthumius, who had refused to  
 obey his general, fell upon his own sword, either  
 to avoid the punishment he had reason to expect,  
 or because he could not survive the disgrace of  
 having excluded himself from a share in such an  
 illustrious action.

As for Paulinus, he took all necessary precau-  
 tions to prevent the Britons from reassembling their  
 forces: he desolated the country, and drove away  
 the cattle; and as the inhabitants neglected agri-  
 culture, and were destitute of magazines, a dread-  
 ful famine ensued, by which great numbers perished.  
 Notwithstanding this grievous calamity, they chose Suetonius is  
 rather to starve upon their native hills than eat the recalled by  
 bread of slavery; though nothing retarded their Nero,  
 entire reduction, but a quarrel that arose between  
 Suetonius and the new procurator Julius Classicia-  
 nus, who having been restricted in his extortions  
 by the general, made such unfavourable reports of  
 his conduct at the court of Rome, that Nero sent  
 over his freedman Polycletus to take cognizance of  
 the affair, and compromise the difference. Though  
 this inspector acquitted Paulinus of the misdemea-  
 nours laid to his charge, the procurator still con-  
 tinued to do him ill offices with the emperor, by  
 whom at last the proprætor was recalled, and Pe-  
 tronius Turpilianus, late consul, appointed in his  
 room. and Petro-  
 nius Turpi-  
 lianus ap-  
 pointed his  
 successor;

The Britons defended their liberties with such  
 unwearied obstinacy, even in the midst of the most  
 terrible distresses, and such a number of troops was  
 required to maintain conquests of greater impor-  
 tance in other parts of Europe, that Nero would  
 have recalled the Roman forces from Britain, at  
 this

An. Ch. 61. this juncture, had he not been ashamed to give up the only province which had been added to the empire by Claudius, to whom he owed his own elevation. He therefore nominated Turpilianus to the command in Britain, and he could not have pitched upon a more proper person to revive the Roman influence in this island; for, instead of imitating the example of Suetonius, whose severities had rendered him odious to the people, and who was particularly detested, on account of his having destroyed the seminary of their laws and religion, he treated them with mildness and humanity; so that their passions subsided, their resentments cooled, and the revolted states returned to their obedience\*.

An. Ch. 65.

under  
whom the  
soldiers be-  
come into-  
lerably li-  
centious.

His manner of government gave great satisfaction at Rome, where, when he returned, triumphal honours were decreed to him by the senate: and his successor Trebellius Maximus pursuing the same plan of conduct, the Britons were gradually reconciled to the laws and customs of the Romans. Nevertheless, he grew in contempt with the soldiers for his inactivity and avarice; and their insolence broke out in tumults, encouraged by Roscius Cælius, legate of the twentieth legion: so that the proprætor was forced to compound the matter with the mutineers, who being indulged in all manner of licentiousness, allowed him to maintain the shadow of authority, until the beginning of the civil war, in the latter end of Nero's reign; when the auxiliary cohorts and cavalry deserting to Cælius, he was fain to fly for protection to Vitellius, who had assumed the purple in Germany.

An. Ch. 69.

Nero being slain during these transactions, Britain enjoyed some repose in the short reigns of

\* Those were the Iceni and their confederates, inhabiting the middle parts of the island, as far north as Lincolnshire, and westward to the

Severne, through which the procurator Catus had made those roads, canals, and other works described by Dr. Stukely in his first Iter.

Galba and Otho, the troops of this province being commanded by their several tribunes, among whom Caelius assumed the chief authority. But as soon as Vitellius had established himself on the imperial throne, he bestowed the command of the army in Britain on Vectius Bolanus, who, being little acquainted with the operations of the war, allowed the Britons to live in peace, contenting himself with the affection of his soldiers, which he took pains to conciliate; so that the island enjoyed great tranquillity during his government, until he was relieved by Petilius Cerealis, immediately upon Vespasian's accession to the imperial dignity. This officer, during his administration, attacked at different times, and as often defeated the Brigantes, who were the most numerous and powerful people in the whole island. And Julius Frontinus, by whom he was succeeded, acquired an equal share of glory, in subduing the Silures, who were reckoned the most warlike nation of the Britons, and almost inaccessible from the nature of their situation.

The contests for the empire among so many competitors, had called off the attention of the Romans from the affairs of Britain; and as their armies were engaged in more interesting disputes, than could arise from the administration of such a remote province, Venutius had taken this opportunity to revenge his old quarrel, by exciting a revolt among the Brigantes and other nations, who forthwith invaded the Roman province, and met with little opposition, until the arrival of Cerealis, by whom they were entirely reduced; a conquest that concurred with the victories he had before obtained in Gaul and Germany, to raise his character to the highest pinnacle of military reputation. And although Frontinus might have been expected to have made a disadvantageous figure, in coming

An. Ch. 69.

Vitellius bestows the command in Britain upon Vectius Bolanus.

Petilius Cerealis appointed governor, and is succeeded by Frontinus.



An. Ch. 78. after such an illustrious general, he supported the dignity of the empire with equal capacity, and acquired an equal portion of renown in subduing the Silures, who inhabited the forest of Deane, and the counties of Hereford and Monmouth.

The command conferred upon Agricola.

Frontinus was succeeded in command by Julius Agricola, who had served in Britain under Suetonius and Cerealis, and on every occasion distinguished himself by his valour and ability. Immediately before he was appointed to this government, the Ordovices of Denbighshire and Flintshire had surpris'd and cut in pieces a body of Roman cavalry quartered upon their frontiers; and Agricola no sooner arriv'd, than he assembled his army, and began his march into the enemy's country. They retired to their mountains, where they thought themselves secure; but no difficulty could withstand his valour. He made them pay dearly for the petty advantage they gained, and not only defeated and reduced the Ordovices, but also penetrated into the isle of Anglesey, which Suetonius had been constrained to abandon.

On this occasion, being destitute of boats to transport his troops, he ordered his cavalry to swim across the channel; an enterprize which astonish'd the inhabitants to such a degree, that they submitted without having made the least opposition\*.

Agricola returning from this glorious expedition, spent the winter in rectifying the disorders that had crept into the administration of the province; in reforming the soldiery, and improving the discipline of the army. These important aims he accomplished with equal sagacity and success: he prevented extortion, bridled the insolence of power, appointed magistrates of approved integrity, and

\* There are still to be seen the remains of two Roman forts, one of which is called Griceil, probably from the name of Agricola.

by his mild and equitable government maintained the province in tranquility and abundance: so that the nations had cause to rejoice when, upon the death of Vespasian, which happened at this period, his son and successor Titus, who knew his worth and ability, confirmed him in his command. In the beginning of summer he took the field again, directing his march towards the north, where he subdued the Otodini of Northumberland, who had not yet submitted to the Romans; and that he might not lose his summer-conquests during the severity of winter, he ordered a chain of forts to be built at proper distances; in which he left garisons to quell any commotions that might arise, and sustain one another occasionally, in case they should be attacked\*. In this campaign he finished the conquest of what is now called England.

An. Ch. 78.

who finishes the conquest of South Britain;

He employed the succeeding winter in making further improvements on the civil regulations of the province; and, by the elegance of his manners and insinuating address, made such progress in taming the barbarity of the Britons, that they became enamoured of the Roman arts and magnificence, which they began to imitate with surprising emulation. They raised stately temples, superb porticoes, and public edifices of the Grecian structure; they learned and spoke the Latin language, which they formerly abhorred; they accustomed themselves to wear the Roman toga, and looked upon that as a mark of politeness, which was in effect a badge of their slavery.

An. Ch. 79. and polishes the Britons.

In these advances to politeness and effeminacy, they were encouraged and assisted by Agricola,

\* Those castles afterwards constituted the chief strength of Adrian's Vallum, which was no other than a trench or parapet joining the forts together. The inscriptions on stones dug out of the earth in different parts of Northumberland, Westmoreland, and Cumberland, more ancient than the reign of Adrian, leave no room to doubt that Agricola subdued the Otodini as well as the western Brigantes. Baxter Gloss. Brit. ant.

An. Ch. 79- who in the course of a social intercourse with the chiefs and princes, made them acquainted with the comforts and conveniences of life, to which they had hitherto been strangers: he had previously secured their esteem and confidence by enlisting their vassals, of whom he composed the auxiliary cohorts, and giving the command of them to British officers: he persuaded them to build public structures for the ornament of their country, and houses more suitable to the dignity of their birth, than those contemptible and inconvenient cabins in which they resided. He even furnished them with means to make these improvements, and indulged their sons with a Roman education at his own expence.

Tacit. Vit.  
Agricol.

He advances into  
Scotland,

In his third campaign, he advanced into the country now called Scotland, as far as the river Tay, carrying the terror and novelty of his arms among nations hitherto unknown, who, though his army was exposed to the rage and inclemency of dreadful tempests, never ventured to harass it in the march; so that they were conquered as soon as discovered; and these conquests secured by forts so advantageously situated, so artfully constructed, and so faithfully maintained, that not even one of them was ever taken, abandoned, or betrayed. They were well supplied with provisions and garrisons, that maintained them through the winter, during which the soldiers made several excursions and ravaged the country; to the inconceivable vexation and even despair of the inhabitants, who hoped to gain in one season what they lost in another.

and fortifies  
the isthmus  
between the  
Forth and  
Clyde.

The succeeding year he employed in extending and still further securing the conquests of the preceding campaign; for he drove the enemy before him to the western extremities of the island, and fortified the isthmus between the rivers Forth and Clyde, with a chain of castles, by which the natives were excluded from the Roman settlements.



and as it were confined within the limits of another island. An.Ch. 79.

In the fifth year of his expedition, he penetrated beyond the friths, and embarking on board of a fleet equipped for conquest and discovery, sailed along the western coasts of Scotland, visited several unknown nations, made descents in several places of the Highlands, Hebrides, and Orkneys; and, in repeated engagements, defeated the clans who took arms in defence of their country.

At his return from this naval excursion, he quartered his troops in the part of Britain which lies opposite to Ireland, with a view to invade that island, which he hoped to conquer with a very moderate force, in consequence of the information he had received from an Irish chief, who having been expelled from his own country, fled to Agricola for refuge: but he was prevented from executing this resolution by the envy and jealousy of Domitian, who had by this time succeeded Titus on the imperial throne.

The sixth campaign of Agricola was of all the most glorious and important. Hearing that the nations on the other side of the Forth were in commotion, he resolved to penetrate to the very northern extremity of the island, and ordered his fleet to keep pace with the march of his army along the shore. He had not proceeded far in this manner, when he understood from the prisoners, that the Britons of that country, distinguished by the name of Caledonians, had assembled a vast multitude of armed men, in order to dispute his passage; and that they intended to make irruptions into the lowlands with several distinct armies, in order to attack the Roman settlements. Cautioned by this intelligence, he divided into three separate bodies, that he might not be surrounded by their numbers, or circumvented by their superior knowledge of the country.

Marches  
against the  
Caledonians.

An. Ch. 79.  
who sur-  
prise one of  
his legions.

He had like to have suffered severely by this disposition, which was no sooner communicated to the Britons, than they joined their troops again with incredible dispatch; and surprising in the night the ninth legion, which lay at a distance from the army, cut in pieces the guards, and broke into the camp with incredible impetuosity. Agricola, apprised of their intention, detached his cavalry on the instant to sustain the legion, and amuse the enemy, until the infantry should arrive: so that, when day broke, the enemy perceiving the succours advancing, would have willingly retired; but as they were now engaged in front and rear, they found themselves obliged to maintain the battle, which was fought for some time with equal obstinacy on both sides; till at last the enemy were constrained to fly before the arms and discipline of the Romans; and perhaps that day would have terminated the war, had they not found shelter among their mountains, woods, and morasses, which were unknown and inaccessible to the victors.

They were not disconcerted by this defeat, which they imputed to unforeseen accidents, rather than to the valour of the Romans, and resolved once more to try the fortune of a battle: for this purpose they sent all their wives and children into their fortified towns, and assembled an army superior to that which they had at first brought into the field; but nothing farther was attempted on either side, during the remaining part of the season; and in the winter a German cohort, resolving to return to their own country, seized on two vessels, and put to sea; but were driven upon the coast of Friesland, where they were enslaved. Soon as the weather would permit Agricola to take the field in the succeeding spring, he ordered his navy to alarm the coast, while he himself began his march to the Grampian hills; on which he found the enemy posted, to the number of thirty thousand, commanded by their prince

prince Galgacus, who, in a pathetic speech to his people, represented, that situated as they were, at the extremity of the island, they had no resource but their courage, and that victory alone could save them from eternal bondage.

Agricola too judged it expedient to harrangue his soldiers, after he had drawn them up in order of battle, so as that the confederate Britons in his army should bear the first shock of the enemy's attack, the legions being placed in the rear to support this body, in case it should be repulsed. As for the army of Galgacus, it was arranged upon the declivity of a hill, which it covered entirely, and the cavalry skirted the plain, with the chariots of war in the front of their line. The Roman general extended his first line to the right and left, that he might not be outflanked by such a multitude; he alighted from his horse and posted himself at the head of the legions. The battle began with showers of javelins, which did but little execution on either side, though the Britons at this distance enjoyed an advantage, which they could not expect to maintain in close fight, with their small targets and long pointless swords, against the offensive and defensive arms of the legionary soldiers. Agricola therefore detached four cohorts of Batavians and Thuringians to attack them sword in hand; these springing forwards with great celerity, employed their short pointed swords against the naked bodies of the islanders, in such a manner, that a great number fell dead on the spot, and the enemy began to fall into confusion. The rest of the Roman army profiting by this disorder, advanced immediately to the attack, and falling among them with great impetuosity, a terrible slaughter ensued; while the chariots were rendered useless by the unevenness of the ground. The British infantry, posted upon the brow of the hill, made a motion to attack the



An. Ch. 79. Romans, who were by this time dispersed in the pursuit of those they had already routed; but, Galgacus is defeated at the Grampian hills. Agricola perceiving their design, ordered part of his cavalry to advance and keep them in awe, and the rest of his troops in the mean time compleated the victory. Now a dreadful scene ensued. The wings were ordered to close and flank the Caledonians on both sides; then the carnage and confusion redoubled. They endeavoured to fly; but finding themselves inclosed on every side, threw down their arms and rushed upon the swords of the Romans: the ground was strewed with the mangled bodies of the dead and dying, and overflowed with the blood of those that fell: yet, even in this extremity, the Britons did not fail to exhibit proofs of valour and recollection; for as they were repulsed to the neighbouring woods, they rallied in small bodies, and fell upon those who were too eager in the pursuit. They made several efforts of this nature; till Galgacus, finding it impossible to restore the battle, retired with the remains of his army, leaving ten thousand men dead on the field; whereas the Romans lost but three hundred and forty. The fortune of this day was celebrated on one side in shouts of joy, with which the Roman camp resounded through the night; and on the other, bewailed with dismal yells and lamentations that echoed from the mountain, while they examined the particulars of their loss, howled over their dead countrymen, and endeavoured to carry off their wounded princes. Yet the darkness facilitated the retreat of the vanquished, in which they used such diligence, that before day-light there was not one to be seen; a gloomy silence reigned over the neighbouring hills; and distant clouds of smoke issued from the Caledonian villages, which they themselves had burned in the first transports of their despair; nay, to such a pitch of horror and frenzy did

did this prevail, that many chieftains massacred their own wives and children, that they might not be exposed to the miseries of want, or be violated and enslaved by the insulting Romans. An. Ch. 79.

The Roman general having struck this decisive blow\*, did not think proper to pursue a scattered enemy thro' mountains, fens, and woods, to which he was a stranger; but the season being exhausted, he marched back to the shire of Angus, inhabited by the Horesti, who immediately submitted to his government, and delivered hostages for their good behaviour. There he embarked a body of his troops on board of the fleet, and ordered the commander to surround the whole coast of Britain, which had not been discovered to be an island till the preceding year; which directions being given, he led his army into winter quarters. As for the fleet, it steered to the northward, where it subdued the Orkneys; and making a tour of the whole island, arrived in the port of Sandwich, without having met with the least disaster. The Roman fleet sails round the whole island of Great Britain.

Domitian received the news of this victory with marks of joy upon his countenance, while his heart seemed with the most rancorous envy, at the achievements and reputation of Agricola; for whom, however, he commanded the senate to decree triumphal honours and a statue crowned with laurel. Corn. Tacit. Agric. Vit.

\* This battle, according to the author of Britannia Romana, was fought at Forten-Gall camp, sixteen miles beyond Perth; though Gordon, in his Itinerarium septentrionale, fixes it at the confluence of the Erne and Ruchel, in Strathorne.

Galgacus, though chosen to command the Caledonians upon this occasion, is supposed to have been a Scoto-Brigantian from Galloway, which, with the low-lands of Scot-

land, was inhabited by the same people who possessed the northern parts of England: these were such as retired from the oppression of the Romans, and joined the Caledonians, who lived on the other side of the Forth.---This conjecture of Mr. Baxter in his Glossary is supported by his Welch name Gaulaur ap Llienauc (for so he is called by the ancient author of the Triades) signifying the fruit of a stolen embrace.

But

An. Ch. 79.  
Agricola is  
recalled.

But that he might not seize other opportunities of augmenting his renown, he recalled that great general, on pretence of bestowing upon him the government of Syria. This must have been a very mortifying order to Agricola, who had almost finished the intire reduction of Britain; nevertheless, he obeyed without repining, and delivering up his province in a state of quiet and submission to his successor Sallustius Lucullus, returned to Rome, where he was received with coldness and contempt; and in a little time expired, not without suspicion of having been poisoned by the directions of Domitian. The Romans in Britain, far from pursuing the advantage they had gained in the last victory, allowed the Caledonians to enjoy their own possessions, and seemed to consider the forts erected between the two friths, as the proper boundaries of the empire. Perhaps this moderation contributed to the tranquility of the province, which was not disturbed by any commotion from this period to the reign of Adrian, if it was even then really disturbed.

The Caledonians  
make ir-  
ruptions in-  
to Britain.

All the inhabitants of Britain were not yet reconciled to the dominion of the Romans. Some even of the southern parts detesting the manners of their conquerors, who loaded them with grievous taxes, and transported the greatest part of their youth to fight their battles in other parts of the world, chose rather to forsake their native possessions, than maintain them on such servile terms; and accordingly a great number of them retired beyond the friths, where they lived independent, though poor, among the Caledonians, and joined them in the sequel, when they made such dreadful irruptions into the Roman province, and ravaged the lands of their countrymen with fire and sword.

Their first exploit of this kind was performed in the first year of Adrian's reign; on which occa-

sion



tion they surprised and demolished some of the forts An. Ch. 79. which Agricola had built on the isthmus, and returned to their native hills laden with booty. The emperor being informed of this commotion, conferred the government of Britain upon Julius Severus, who was immediately recalled to be employed elsewhere; and as the Caledonians continued their incursions, the emperor resolved to go thither in person, and tame the insolence of those ferocious islanders, who could not be persuaded to live in peace.

After he had landed in Britain, and proceeded as far as York, he met with some old officers who had served under Agricola; and these gave him such an unfavourable account of the country which he intended to subdue, that he laid aside the design of penetrating into a savage country, covered with impassable woods, mountains, and morasses, the conquest of which would be attended with great difficulty and danger, and at last yield neither glory nor advantage. He exercised his sagacity and reflection in contriving measures for preserving the peace of the province; and judging that the irruptions of the Caledonians, or Picts, proceeded from their being hampered for want of room, in such a narrow corner of the island, he ordered the castles between the friths to be abandoned, and contracted the Roman province within the other line of forts built also by Agricola, from Solway frith to the river Tyne. It was upon this occasion, as we have already hinted, that he raised a strong rampart of earth connecting these forts, extending ninety miles across the island from east to west. The southern parts being thus secured from insult, and the Caledonians indulged with plenty of ground, he returned to Rome, where he was honoured with the title of Restorer of Britain, as we learn from some medals struck on that occasion.

Adrian arrives in Britain,

and builds the famous rampart between the Esk and Tyne.

These

An.Ch. 134.

Lollius Urbicus takes the command in Britain, and builds a strong wall between the Forth and Clyde.

An.Ch. 140.

These precautions were such as effectually restrained the northern nations, who in all probability were more awed by the character than by the works of Adrian; for though they desisted from all hostilities during his reign, they no sooner were informed of his death, without knowing the capacity of his successor, than they demolished his rampart in several parts, and renewed their ravages in the Roman province. These tidings being reported at Rome, the new emperor, Antoninus Pius, bestowed the command in Britain on Lollius Urbicus, who not only drove the enemy out of the northern parts of England, but even repelled them beyond the limits within which they had been confined by Agricola: he raised a fortification almost in the same line from frith to frith, and hard by established a strong camp, in which he kept a body of forces to defend the wall and defeat the attempts of the Caledonians. In consequence of these achievements, Antoninus was complimented with the title of Britannicus, though he had never been in the island.

Though the Caledonian adventurers were thus restricted, we ought not to suppose that this general drove all the inhabitants of the lowlands before him to the north of Scotland. The eastern parts of Lothian and the counties adjoining to Cumberland, Westmoreland, and Northumberland, were possessed by people, who probably, on this occasion, submitted to the Roman sway, and afterwards claimed their protection from the incursions of those who were their former allies.

These, however, excited no new commotions during the remaining part of the reign of Antoninus Pius; but at his death, which they looked upon as a favourable conjuncture, they renewed their ravages; and Marcus Aurelius, who succeeded to the imperial throne, sent over Calpurnius Agricola

as proprætor, to re-establish the tranquility of Britain. This governor's endeavours were attended with the desired success; and we hear of no other disturbances in this reign, during which a British king, of the name of Lucius, is said to have embraced the Christian religion\*.

Bed. p. 19.

Marcus Aurelius being succeeded by his son Commodus, a flagitious wretch, unworthy of such a father, the management of affairs fell into the hands of worthless pimps and parasites, who, laying aside the officers of ability and integrity, who had served the late emperor, conferred posts and governments upon profligate persons of their own stamp, who had become necessary instruments in their debauches, or purchased their promotion with extravagant sums of money; for which they indemnified themselves by fleecing the people subjected to their government. Such preposterous conduct could not fail of being attended with a relaxation of discipline in the army, and disorder and discontent in the provinces; of which the Caledonians taking advantage, assembled a strong body of forces, broke through the wall of Antoninus, cut off the Roman general and all his troops, and filled the whole country with terror and devastation. Commodus, alarmed at the ravages and success of those indomitable barbarians, appointed Ulpius Marcellus proprætor in Britain; and this commander being a

The Caledonians renew their incursions;

\* Notwithstanding the great pains taken by Bede, Fisher, Stillingfleet, and other historians, in order to ascertain the conversion of this prince, it is very much doubted whether there ever was such a king among the Britons; nor was there any formed christian church in this island till after the year two hundred and fifty. Not but that there might be a number of private converts long before this period, in

consequence of the correspondence between Britain and Rome. Indeed one would imagine from the brass medal of Christ, with an Hebrew inscription, signifying, "This is Jesus Christ," &c. lately dug out of the rubbish of the chief tribunal of the Druids in the isle of Anglesey, that some preacher of the christian religion had been there condemned and sacrificed, before they were extirpated by Suetonius Paulinus.

An. Ch. 162. person of uncorrupted morals, experience in the art of war, undaunted courage, and indefatigable vigilance, soon restored the troops to their ancient discipline by his example and severity; and defeated the Caledonians in several engagements with great slaughter, by which they were so weakened and intimidated, that they did not attempt another invasion during the remaining part of this emperor's reign. But the glory he acquired in this expedition had like to have cost him his life, through the envy and jealousy of his master, who assumed the title of Britannicus, on account of the victory the prætor had won: and recalling him from his government, sold his place to the best bidder. This, in all probability, was some low-born miscreant, without weight or authority, who allowed the soldiers to live according to their own pleasure, regardless of discipline or restraint, until, under a succession of these commanders, they degenerated to such a degree of licentiousness, that a mutiny ensued. A deputation of fifteen hundred being sent to Rome with complaints against the administration, struck such a terror into the heart of Commodus, that he sacrificed Perennis, the commander of his prætorian guards, to appease their dangerous clamour; and bestowed the command of the province upon Pertinax, who afterwards ascended the imperial throne.

Pertinax  
appointed  
to the go-  
vernment  
of Britain:

Even this prætor, with all his great talents, found it almost impracticable to reduce them to order and obedience; for when he attempted to exert his authority, one of the mutinous legions took to their arms, and a tumult ensued, in which a great deal of blood was spilt, and Pertinax himself left for dead upon the spot. Notwithstanding this miscarriage in the beginning, he afterwards employed his industry and address to such good purpose, that he effected a reformation; and al-  
though



though he made some severe examples of the most seditious among them, became a favourite with the army. Yet he found such difficulty in conquering their aversion to exact discipline, that he desired to be recalled, and having at length obtained his request, was succeeded by Clodius Albinus, who, though commanded to resign his office to Junius Severus, because he had given offence in a speech he made to the army, on a false report of the emperor's death, refused to part with the government, and continued in possession of it at the death of Commodus, who was soon after murdered in his own palace.

An.Ch. 162.

Is succeeded by Clodius Albinus.

Lamprid. i. Comm.

It was at this period that Pertinax assumed the imperial purple; and all good men rejoiced at his elevation, inasmuch as his great abilities, and unblemished character, promised a wise, mild, and happy administration: nor would he have disappointed the expectation of his subjects, had he lived to exert those talents and virtues by which his character was distinguished; for this very reason his elevation could not but give disgust to those who knew their conduct would not stand the test of inquiry. This was the case with the prætorian troops, who not only expected to be punished for their licentiousness, but also dreaded the prospect of a reformation, which, in order to avert, they murdered the new emperor, at the immediate instigation of Didius Julianus, to whom they sold the imperial dignity. Perhaps this person, who had no other pretensions than his wealth, would not have presumed to attempt such a purchase, unless he had been encouraged with the promise of support, by Albinus, who now commanded in Britain, and looked upon Pertinax as his enemy.

An.Ch. 189.

Didius was no sooner proclaimed emperor, than he found himself unequal to the task of managing such an unwieldy purchase. His person and government

An.Ch.189. ment were treated with universal contempt; and the armies that served in the distant provinces, incensed at the presumption of the prætorian band, who had raised him to the throne without their knowledge and concurrence, desired their own generals to assume the imperial purple. It was in consequence of such importunities that C. Pescennius Niger declared himself emperor in the East, and Septimus Severus put on the imperial ensigns in Illyria. He had an advantage over his competitor in being near the capital, whither he marched without delay, and was acknowledged by the senate, which had, upon his approach, given orders for putting Didius to death. But he did not think himself secure on the throne while Niger lived, and Albinus maintained such influence among the legions of Britain. The last therefore, he cajoled with promises of sharing the empire with him, and in the mean time permitted him to enjoy the badge and distinctions of his associate, until Niger was defeated and slain; then he revolved different expedients for disengaging himself from Albinus, whose promotion stood in the way of his own family. No method seemed more effectual and expeditious than that of poison, which he hired some assassins to administer: but Albinus, being apprised of their design, extorted from them a confession with the rack, and being convinced of his colleague's treachery, declared war against Severus, and assumed the title of emperor and Augustus. Conscious of his own strength and influence, he forthwith crossed the sea, and gained the army on the Rhine over to his party; while Severus advanced at the head of his troops to decide the contention by force of arms: these two powerful rivals meeting in a large plain near Lyons in Gaul, a terrible battle ensued, and continued a long time with doubtful success, the British troops having charged

Albinus  
sets up for  
the empire,  
and is de-  
feated by  
Severus.

charged with such impetuosity in the beginning, that Severus had like to have been worsted; but his general, Lætus, with a fresh body of men, changed the fortune of the day: and Albinus seeing his legions routed, fell upon his own sword in despair.

An.Ch.197.

Spartian. in Sever. Herodian. l. 3. Virius Lupus is sent into Britain with the title of prætor.

Severus was no sooner rendered by this decisive action sole master of the empire, than he dispatched Virius Lupus into Britain, with the title of prætor, to repel the Caledonians, who had made incursions even beyond Adrian's wall, during the absence of the legions which had been transported to the continent by Albinus. Mean while the emperor himself remained in Gaul, where, among other regulations, he divided the government of Britain into two provinces. Lupus on his arrival finding the province in the utmost distress, and the Caledonians very powerful, in consequence of their being joined by the Meatae, who inhabited the district between the walls of Antoninus and Adrian, he did not chuse to depend upon the hazard of war, but, on pretence of redeeming the captives, purchased a peace from the barbarians. This treaty remained in full force and unviolated for several years, till at length the northern Britons, tired of inaction, which might blunt their martial genius, or stimulated by wants which they could supply by rapine only, made an irruption into the Roman province, with such numbers and impetuosity, that the prætors, after having joined their forces, and made divers unsuccessful efforts to stem the torrent, were obliged to send to Rome for fresh reinforcements.

Severus, alarmed at the distress of Britain, which was considered as the most important province of the empire, resolved to go thither in person; and assembling an army without delay, set out on the expedition in his declining age, when he was so

An. Ch. 197. Crippled with the gout, that he was obliged to be carried in a litter; and that he might be able to surmount every obstacle that could retard the intire conquest of the island, he not only provided a strong army of veteran troops, but on his arrival in Britain, he likewise prepared pontoons to be laid over morasses, and other military machines for clearing woods, opening roads, and rendering mountains accessible; so that the enemy should not avail themselves of the fastnesses to which they usually retired from the pursuit of their conquests.

Severus arrives in Britain, and refuses to grant peace to the Caledonians.

The fame of the emperor's arrival in Britain, and the report of these mighty preparations, made such an impression upon the Caledonians and their allies, that they sent ambassadors to sue for peace, which however they could not obtain, because he was now fully determined to reduce them effectually; and that he might devote his whole attention to this enterprise, he left the administration of affairs in South Britain to the care of his younger son Geta, resolving that the eldest should attend him in the expedition.

These previous measures being taken, he began his march, and advancing towards Adrian's rampart, found the whole country desolated by the enemy; a circumstance that did not fail to corroborate the resolution he had already taken, to merit and assume the glorious title of Britannicus, which had attractions superior to all the glory he had acquired, and was in all appearance the chief motive that induced him to undertake the conquest of such a warlike people, in spite of the dangers of the campaign, and the infirmities of old age, under which he laboured. As he penetrated into the country of the Caledonians, he employed his pioneers in laying it open; and indeed he could not use too much precaution of this kind against the efforts of



those northern Britons, who wisely avoided general actions with such an invincible army, but seized all opportunities of harrassing them in their march, and cutting off small parties that straggled in quest of forage or plunder. They followed the maxims of Cassivellaunus, who allured the Roman soldiers into bogs, thickets, and narrow passes, after droves of cattle assembled for that purpose, and then fell upon them by surprise with incredible fury, after having cut off their communication with the army: in all probability these Caledonians were originally of the same race of Britons over whom that prince had reigned. They were armed and painted in the same manner: nor do they seem to have degenerated in point of courage and fortitude; for they were accustomed to swim through marshes, lakes, and rivers; and exposed themselves voluntarily to the most imminent dangers. They exerted their industry and valour to such a degree, in multiplying the perils and hardships of their invaders, that numbers of the Roman soldiers, fatigued with hard duty, and distracted with continual alarms, intreated their comrades to put an end to their miserable lives, lest they should fall into the hands of such a savage enemy; and Severus is said to have lost fifty thousand men in this expedition\*.

Not-

\* The Caledonians were, in all probability, rendered more hardy than their southern progenitors, by the extreme cold and poverty of the country which they inhabited. They lived in tents and cabbins upon the tops of mountains, in the midst of woods, and among almost inaccessible morasses, ignorant of arts and agriculture. They lived upon wild roots, fruits, the milk and flesh of their cattle, besides the venison they killed in hunting. They had moreover a very extraordinary eatable, of which the bigness of a common bean was

sufficient to satisfy the cravings of hunger and thirst; and though their seas, rivers, and lakes, teemed with delicate fish, they were prohibited by their religion from tasting this bounty of nature. Like the Britons of the south, they held their wives as a common good for the benefit of society; and indeed they seemed to have the same opinion with regard to every other convenience; for whatever attracted their cupidity, they seized without scruple.

They were bold, strong, active,  
G 2 patient

An.Ch. 197.  
He pene-  
trates to the  
extremity  
of the  
island.

Notwithstanding all these difficulties, losses, and mortifications, Severus pursued his purpose with incredible resolution, until he had made his way to the most northern extremity of the island; and then granted peace to the enemy, which they were glad to accept on the terms that he was pleased to propose. Whatever the articles of this pacification may have been, certain it is they submitted to the Roman empire; and Severus, not yet satisfied of their sincerity and faith, ordered a new wall to be built across the Roman province, so near the rampart raised by Adrian, that some authors imagine the first served as a foundation to the other. It was strengthened by castella built within less than a mile of each other, four small turrets between every two castella, a deep ditch to the north, and extended sixty-eight miles from Segedunum or Cousin's house on the river Tyne to Timocelum or Boulnefs near Carlisle. Severus being by this time almost overwhelmed with infirmities, retired to York, leaving his son Antoninus, afterwards surnamed Caracalla, to superintend this work, and take the command of the army; and this prince, who was a youth of profligate morals, and had been more than once engaged in conspiracies against his father's life, made such an arbitrary use of his authority, and treated the lately pacified North Britons with such insolence and cruelty, as provoked them to renounce the peace, and take arms once more against the Romans.

An.Ch. 208. A revolt which incensed the old emperor to such a pitch of indignation, that ordering himself to be carried immediately to the camp, he harangued the

patient of labour, thirst, and hunger, and so inured to hardships, that they could run up to the neck in bogs, and continue three days in that situation, without any manner of sustenance. They were raw-boned and red-haired; a circumstance which,

together with the consideration of their arms, induced Tacitus to believe they were descended from the Germans; and lastly, they used chariots in battle, drawn by small horses, remarkably nimble and hardy. Dio. Herodian.

soldiers

soldiers upon the inconstancy and perfidy of those barbarians, whom, in a verse of Homer, he exhorted them to extirpate, without even sparing the child in the mother's womb. Having thus inflamed their resentment, he invested Caracalla with the command of this expedition; while he himself returned to York, where in a little time he ended his days. With respect to the war, his orders were very ill executed by Caracalla, who was more intent upon courting the favour of the army than in annoying the enemy; for, being persuaded that his father was already on the verge of the grave, he had begun to form a party against his brother Geta. Nor was he disappointed in his expectation touching the old emperor, the news of whose death no sooner reached him, than he renewed the peace with the Caledonians and Meatae; and having received hostages for the performance of articles, retired into the Roman province.

Severus bequeathed the empire to his two sons, though Caracalla's great ambition was to reign alone, and all his efforts were directed to this aim, which, however, he could not accomplish at this period; the will of the old emperor was religiously obeyed: the soldiers took the oath of fidelity to Bassianus (afterwards Caracalla) and Geta, and the two brothers went together to Rome, accompanying their father's ashes, which were deposited in Adrian's mausoleum. But the elder, still actuated by the most furious ambition, and unnatural animosity, gratified those pernicious passions with the sacrifice of his brother, who was assassinated by his direction.

From the departure of these two princes, there is a melancholy chasm in the history of this country for a great number of years; during which, historians are silent upon the subject, and all the transactions we can learn, have been found in several inscriptions in different parts of England. From these,

An Ch 202.

An.Ch.211.

Spartian in  
Sever. in  
Herod. 33.  
Dio. l. 76.  
An Ch.238.A great  
chasm in  
the history  
of Britain.

An.Ch.242. it appears that in the reign of Gordian III. Mæcilius Fuscus commanded in this island, when he repaired the barracks and arsenals which had fallen to decay; that two years after this event, Cneius Lucilianus the proprætor built a bath, with an exchange or portico; and that Nonius Philippus was governor of the British province, in the year that preceded the death of the emperor Gordian.

Cam.Cumb.

A number  
of tyrants  
sprung up  
in this  
island.

These are all the particulars relating to the history of England, which are to be collected from the reign of Caracalla, to that of Publius Licinius Galienus, in which time thirty tyrants sprung from the corruption of his government. Six of these, namely, Lollianus, Victorianus, Posthumus, the elder and younger Tetricus, with Marius, seem to have declared for themselves in this island; at least, the number of their coins found in the neighbourhood of Colchester, encourage this conjecture; and Porphyry the philosopher, who lived in those times, calls Britain a soil fruitful in tyrants. The peace of this island might have been restored by Marcus Aurelius Flavius Claudius, the successor of Galienus, had not he been suddenly overtaken by death, in the midst of his preparations for reducing Tetricus, who at that time ruled the western provinces, and in all probability was in possession of Britain. From his death we are acquainted with no British occurrence for a series of seventeen years; till the reign of Probus, during which the imperial purple was assumed by Proculus and Bonosus (said to be a Briton) who laid claim to this island, Spain, and Gaul, and seem to have been abetted by the natives of this country; but their pretensions soon vanished before the fortune of Probus, who (we are told by Vopiscus) permitted the Britons to cultivate the grape and make wine. But Bonosus was not the only person who raised disturbances in Britain during the life of this emperor. Another proprætor whose



whose name is not ascertained, having been recommended to the government of this island by Victorinus Maurus, prime minister and general in chief to Probus, renounced his allegiance, and set up for himself; when Victorinus, ashamed and incensed at the disloyalty of his favourite, came hastily to Britain, where he was affectionately received by the rebellious proprætor, whom he nevertheless assassinated; and the revolt was suppressed by the pretender's death.

Carus, who succeeded to the imperial purple, associated his two sons, Carinus and Numerianus, to the first of whom he assigned Britain and other provinces, which were grievously oppressed by that monster of impurity; though he soon gave way to the fortune of Dioclesian, a brave and active prince, who admitted Maximian to a share of the empire.

In the reign of these colleagues, Carausius, a man of mean parentage, by birth a Menapian, or as others affirm, a Batavian, having distinguished himself for his bravery and military skill, obtained the command of the Roman navy stationed at Boulogne, to guard the seas against the piracies and ravages of the Franks and Saxons, who about that time infested the coast of Gaul. Though he took a number of prizes while he exercised this office, he neither made restitution to the Roman subjects, who had been plundered, nor remitted any part of the booty to the emperor's treasury; nay, it was observed, that he never attacked the pirates, until after they had plundered the coasts, and then he intercepted them when they were laden with the spoils of the country. On account of this conduct, and the great wealth he had amassed, which gave room to suspect him of harbouring more dangerous designs, Maximian Herculus gave orders for apprehending and executing him without delay; but Carausius being apprised of the emperor's intention, secured the fleet in his interest, and sailed for Britain, where

Carausius  
assumes the  
purple in  
Britain.

An.Ch.282. he was joyfully received, and proclaimed emperor by the provincial troops, consisting of one legion and some auxiliary cohorts; a sure proof of the peace and tranquility that prevailed throughout the whole island; and this favourable reception put him in immediate possession of the whole Roman province, as far as the wall of Antoninus, which he repaired and augmented. The next measure he took was to conclude an alliance with those Franks and Saxons against whom he had formerly acted as admiral: he enlisted a number of their troops, increased his fleet with a great addition of stout ships, and being master of Boulogne, supplied it with a good garrison and all manner of necessaries, to endure a siege with which it was threatened by the emperor Maximian.

Eum. Panegy. 8.

He found his account in these prudential steps, which rendered him extremely formidable; and his fleet having obtained a victory over the navy of Maximian, by which he secured the dominion of the sea, the emperors, rather than expose the maritime ports of their dominions to the depredations of such a powerful enemy, consented that he should enjoy one third of the imperial dignity\*.

An.Ch.287. By this pacification, Carausius reigned independent in Britain for the space of seven years, during which he maintained the sovereignty of the main; and is said to have bestowed Scotland upon the Picts, as a recompence for their fidelity and assistance: this is the opinion of Geoffrey of Monmouth and other British historians, who alledge that till this period, the nation of the Picts was never mentioned by any writer whatsoever; but from comparing the relations of Cæsar, Tacitus,

\* This occurrence is authenticated by some medals of Dioclesian, Maximian, and Carausius, having on the reverse PROVIDENTIA

AVGG. & PAX AVGG. S. C. letters which prove that the peace received the sanction of the senate. Vid. Camden's Britannia,

Suetonius, Dio, Herodian, and others, who have An.Ch.287. recorded the transactions of this island, it plainly appears that the Caledonians and Picts were the same people, originally descended from the southern Britons, whose manners and customs they retained; and that they were not particularly distinguished by the name of Picts, till after the Britons of the south had, from their intercourse with the Romans, adopted the manners of their conquerors, and laid aside the practice of painting their bodies, which was still in use among the naked Caledonians; so that the appellation of Picti was now appropriated to this nation.

As the peace between the emperors and Carausius was the result of necessity, the troubles of Egypt being appeased, and the Parthian and African wars finished, Dioclesian and Maximian Herculus conferred the dignity of Cæsar upon their adopted heirs Maximian Galerius and Constantius Chloris, who married their daughters, and then divided the empire into four departments. The share of Constantius comprehending all the provinces on this side of the Alps, he appeared before Boulogne almost as soon as the news of his elevation had reached the place; and having reduced the town, he marched against the Franks, Cauci, and Frisians, who were in alliance with Carausius, whom he could not attack in Britain for want of a navy. These nations he subdued and transplanted into remote countries, that they might not be near enough to obstruct the execution of the plan he had formed, for which a number of ships were then building under his own immediate direction. But in the mean time the object of his preparations was changed by the death of Carausius, whom Alectus, one of his own officers, assassinated, and then assumed the imperial purple.

Carausius is  
assassinated  
by Alectus.  
An.Ch.293.

The

An.Ch. 293

The usurper enjoyed his new dignity for three years, which elapsed before Constantius found himself in a condition to invade the island: but a sufficient navy being provided for that purpose, was divided into two squadrons, stationed at different parts of the continent; in one of which he himself embarked, while the command of the other was bestowed upon Asclepiadotus, an excellent sea-officer, who sailing by the isle of Wight, where the usurper's navy lay, passed unseen, by means of a thick fog, and landed without opposition.

Constantius  
arrives in  
Britain.

Constantius arrived at the very spot where Alec-tus was posted to receive him with an army chiefly composed of Franks and foreigners, who were extremely odious to the Britons; but either dreading to encounter an enemy of such reputation, or infatuated and distracted by the emergency of his situation, he, instead of attacking his enemy before they could be formed on the beach, advanced against Asclepiadotus, who was ready to receive him; and a battle ensuing, he lost the empire and his life; while a terrible slaughter was made among his foreign mercenaries. Those who escaped the carnage in this place, retired to London, with a view to pillage that city, from which they might be transported to the continent in their own ships that still kept the sea; but their design was frustrated by part of the Roman navy, which entering the river Thames, put them all to the sword.

and is re-  
ceived as a  
deliverer by  
the Britons.

Mean while Constantius was received as a deliverer by the Britons, who had groaned under the tyranny of Alec-tus; and upon this occasion he had a glorious opportunity of exerting his clemency, justice, and discretion.

He granted a general amnesty in favour of those who had been concerned in the revolt: he ordered restitution and all possible satisfaction to be made to the sufferers; opened the sea, restored com-  
merce



merce, subdued some northern nations which had declared themselves independent during the troubles, and recovered the whole province of Britain, after it had been ten years dismembered from the empire. Howsoever this island might have suffered in other respects from the tyranny of Carausius, <sup>Eum. Pan. 8.</sup> certain it is, the arts had flourished during his usurpation; the country was embellished with magnificent structures, and the city of London was already considerable for its extent, beauty, and riches: so that Constantius pitched upon Britain as the place of his residence; perhaps he was on this occasion influenced by his passion for the celebrated Helena mother of Constantine, and according to some authors a native of Colchester, while others affirm she was the daughter of Coil, king of the Cumbrian Britons, inhabiting the countries between the walls of Severus and Antoninus.

Whatever may have been her family or country, she was certainly a Briton, and a woman of rare accomplishments, who had long ago captivated the heart of Constantius, with whom she was united in the bands of wedlock, though he had for reasons of state been obliged to repudiate her, on his marriage with Theodora, daughter of Maximian Herculus, to whom he owed his elevation\*. Notwithstanding this match of convenience, He-

\* What seems to have misled some authors, who say, Helena was the concubine of Constantius, was the law that prevailed among the Romans, prohibiting all citizens marrying foreigners of what rank or degree soever; and every person was deemed a foreigner who had not been admitted to the *jus quiritium et civitatis*; which was the case of the Latins and other Italian nations, before they were naturalized by the Julian law. But, though the nuptiæ or con-

bium could not take effect between a Roman and a foreigner, so as to be attended with all the legal privileges of such a union, the matrimonium could be contracted, without any impeachment of the honour and reputation of the parties; and that the marriage between Constantius and Helena was deemed valid in this respect, appears from the pains taken by Maximian to dissolve it, before he intermarried with his daughter Theodora.

An.Ch.296. *lena* still engrossed his whole affection; and by many public works which she executed at her own expence, and other liberalities, acquired the love and veneration of the Britons to such a degree, that their esteem amounted almost to adoration. Such a companion could not fail to complete the happiness of Constantius, whose equitable and wise administration was productive of peace and tranquility to his subjects; and accordingly Britain enjoyed uninterrupted repose till his death, which happened at York, the place of his residence.

Reigns  
with great  
reputation,  
and dies at  
York.

An.Ch.306

He is suc-  
ceeded by  
his son Con-  
stantine.

His son Constantine no sooner heard of his father's indisposition, than he artfully escaped from Rome, where he had been detained by the jealousy of the other emperors, and arrived at York to perform the last offices to Constantius, who declared him his heir and successor in the empire: and this disposition was so agreeable to the army, that they proclaimed him emperor immediately after his father's decease.

who defeats  
Maxentius.

His first care, upon his accession to the throne, was to repel the Picts and Scots, who never failed to make incursions upon the Roman province, when they thought the imperial dignity usurped or unsettled by vacancies, factions, or foreign disputes; and those nations being punished or reduced, he raised a considerable army to maintain his pretensions on the continent against Maxentius, who had assumed the purple, and was actually in possession of Rome. The necessary preparations being made, he transported his forces to Gaul, where he conquered the Franks, who had by this time communicated their name to that country; then marching into Italy, at the head of ninety thousand cavalry, and fourscore thousand foot, gave battle to Maxentius, who was defeated and slain.

Being now in possession of the empire without a rival, he publicly embraced the christian religion, which

which he had long espoused in private ; and his declaration on this subject was in 'all probability promoted by the ardour of the British troops, the majority of whom were profelytes to the doctrines of Christianity, which now began to flourish in the conversion of a Roman emperor, who would have done honour to any religion he had professed. He possessed the talents of a Julius, and the liberality of a Titus ; he was brave, affable, elegant, equitable, and humane ; and so generous, that he often indemnified from his own purse, those very people who had suffered from the impartial administration of justice. Far from sullyng by examples of severity the glory of the victory he obtained over Maxentius, he with a magnanimity peculiar to himself, pardoned all who had fought against him, and restored the forfeited estates of his most rancorous enemies : he recalled those who had been exiled by Maxentius, re-established the senate in its ancient splendour and authority, and made such wise and effectual regulations to secure the peace and tranquility of Rome, that in the inscriptions dedicated to his honour he was styled the deliverer of the city, the founder of peace, restorer of the republic, and unanimously saluted by the name of Constantine the Great.

An.Ch. 306.

and enjoys  
the empire  
without a  
rival.Eutrop. Eumen. ubi supra.  
Zosym.  
lib. 2.

Britain, as one of the chief provinces of the empire, could not but enjoy that peace and felicity which flowed from the gentle sway of such an emperor, who was a native of the island. He seems to have bestowed a great share of his attention upon the concerns of this nation, which he divided into four governments ; namely, the Britannia prima, comprehending the country between the river Thames and the sea : Britannia secunda, consisting of all that lay west of the Severne to the Irish sea : and the additional districts of Flavia Cæsariensis, and Maxima Cæsariensis. The first taking in Cornwall,

Constantine  
makes a  
new division  
of Britain,

An.Ch. 337. wall, Devonshire, Somersetshire, with part of the counties of Wilts and Gloucester; and the other including the northern counties of England, with Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, Staffordshire, and Lincolnshire. The adoption of the two Cæsars by the emperors Dioclesian and Maximian, gave rise to the four præfecti prætorio, who became thenceforward the substitutes of the imperial power; and the government of Britain falling to the share of the præfect of Gaul, he ruled it by a vicar, who during the present reign, was Pacatianus.

and is succeeded by  
Constantine on  
the imperial  
throne.

Constantine the Great dying, after a long reign, the empire was divided among his sons; and Britain, with France, Spain, and part of Germany, became the portion of his eldest son of the same name; who being slain in attempting to invade the territories of his brother Constance, his inheritance devolved to the victor, who, in order to repel the Scots and Picts, still turbulent and ready to improve all advantages, came over to Britain in the middle of winter, bringing along with him his brother Constantius, who longed to view the country in which his father had first seen the light. History is silent as to the management of this war: but in a little time he forfeited all the reputation he had acquired. His vices subjected him to the contempt and detestation of his subjects, and he was deprived of his crown and life by Magnentius, a Gaul of British extraction, who presumed to appropriate the imperial ensigns to himself, notwithstanding the claim of Constantius, now the sole surviving son of Constantine the Great. But the party of this young prince prevailing, after a struggle of three years, the usurper put an end to his own life at Lyons; and the whole province of Britain acknowledged the authority of the victor, who made a very base and impolitic use of his good fortune.



He erected a court of confiscation, under the direction of one Paul, a Spanish notary, whose business was to prosecute the adherents of Magnentius, and confiscate their estates to the imperial exchequer: a task which he performed with abilities peculiar to himself; and not contented with depriving them of their property, he committed the most violent outrages upon their persons, condemning them to mines, fetters, imprisonment, tortures, slavery, and death\*. The barbarity of this inhuman inquisitor rendered him the object of horror to all the islanders; and Martin, the vicar or deputy of the province, not only expostulated with him upon his flagrant injustice and cruelty, but even threatened to leave the island, and make a report of his conduct to the imperial court. As he dreaded nothing more than such a representation, he endeavoured to inveigle the generous Roman into the appearance of a crime, and then ordered him to be put in fetters by virtue of the imperial commission; an indignity, which the other resented to such a degree, that he drew his sword and made a thrust at the Spaniard; but missing his aim, turned the point on himself, and plunged the weapon into his own bosom. This unlucky accident contributed to the triumph and gratification of Paul's cruelty and avarice. He hied him immediately to the head-quarters, besprinkled with the blood of Martin, as a mark of the conspiracy formed against his life; and on this pretence exhausted the whole artillery of his malice against the friends and kindred of the deceased, who were tortured, stripped, and banished. This infamous wretch, however, was at last overtaken by the vengeance of heaven, and burnt alive in the reign of Julian, the adopted successor of Constantius.

An.Ch. 337.

Britain  
groans under the tyranny of Paul, a Spanish notary.

Ammian.  
Marcellin.  
l. P4.

\* He was called Catena, from his dexterity in tramping up plots and conspiracies, in which he entangled the unwary. Ammian. Marcell.

Yet

An. Ch. 337.

Great fertility of the island.

Yet even this domestic oppression did not produce any disturbance in Britain, or hinder the Romans from enjoying the advantage of such a fertile province: for, in one year, they transported quantities of corn sufficient to supply their armies and garrisons in Germany; Gaul being too much wasted by continual wars, to furnish provision for such a number of forces. Not but that during this period, slight incursions were made by the Scots and Picts, who came like famished wolves in quest of prey; but as they returned immediately with the fruits of their rapine, such transitory irruptions did not much affect the tranquility of the province.

Julian, the Apostate, sends a vicar to repel the Picts and Scots.

Nevertheless, Julian afterwards surnamed the Apostate, who at that time possessed the government of Gaul, as the adopted Cesar of Constantius, resolved to bridle the ferocity of those northern nations; and for that purpose sent over Lupicinus, an officer of courage and experience, though rough and haughty in his disposition, with a reinforcement of light-armed cohorts, composed of Heruli, Batavi, and Mærians. Perhaps his chief design in dismissing Lupicinus on this expedition, was to free himself from a man, whom he considered as a spy planted upon him by Constantius, who, by this time, was jealous of Julian, suspecting, not without reason, that he wanted to ingratiate himself with the army, so as it should declare him emperor; a conjecture justified by the subsequent conduct of Julian, who, after the departure of Lupicinus, assumed the purple, and dispatched an officer to Boulogne to prevent the news of this step from being conveyed to Britain; and the vicar actually returned from Gaul, after having secured the province, before he received the least intelligence of this affair. As for the weak, indolent Constantius, he was engaged in a war with Persia, which he could not quit, until the enemy retired into their

OWN

own country: then leaving garrisons in the frontier places, he marched towards Thrace, in order to oppose the usurpation of Julian, by whose procurement he is said to have been poisoned in Cilicia. An. Ch. 363.

This usurper, with all his learning and enterprising genius, was wilful and headstrong, and at length fell a sacrifice to his own temerity; and in attempting to carry the war into the heart of Persia, where he could not be supplied with provisions, he lost his own life, and exposed his army to the most imminent danger of perishing by want, which would really have been their fate, had not his successor Jovian redeemed them from destruction, by giving up the provinces and fortified towns that served as a barrier on that side of the empire. His authority, however, was of very short duration; for he died at Dadaštene in Bithynia, on his return to Constantinople, and was succeeded by Valentinian, in whose reign the Roman province in Britain was reduced to the verge of ruin, by the invasion and ravages of its northern-neighbours\*; assisted by An. Ch. 364.  
The head-  
strong teme-  
rity and fate  
of this  
usurper.

\* Among those people, who at this period, fell upon the Roman Province, Marcellinus mentions the Atticotti, who have been the subject of much dispute and conjecture.—After all that has been said by Buchanan and the Scottish writers in favour of the antiquity of their nation, it does not appear that the Scots had as yet any established monarchy in Britain, from any of the Greek or Latin authors, who have so accurately described the expeditions undertaken and executed by the greatest captains of antiquity, to the most northern extremities of the island. As for Galgacus, he commanded the army of the Caledonians, otherwise called Picts, a distinct nation from the Scots, with whom they in the sequel maintained a long and bloody war. The Scots then, in all probability, did not migrate from Ireland in any great numbers so as to make settlements, and constitute a monarchy, till towards the year three hundred and sixty, when bursting all at once from their native obscurity, as allies of the Picts or Caledonians, they began to make a powerful figure in the northern parts of Britain: and indeed it is amazing that they should have made any figure at all so early in this island, if (as Mr. Carte labours hard to prove) they were a colony of Scythians and Germans, who had ravaged Europe, in the reign of Gallienus, and settled in Galicia, a province of Spain, whence they were, by the orders of Constantine the Great, transplanted to Ireland; part of which only was at that time inhabited by

An.Ch. 364. by the Saxons and Attacotti†; which last people are supposed to have been the Silures, inhabiting the woods and mountains of Wales. These had hitherto been quiet under the dominion of Constantine and his descendants, whom they considered as their countrymen, sprung from the British Helena; but now, that the empire was possessed by a prince of another line, severe, punctual and rigid in his exactions, they revoked their submission, and joining the Meatae, Caledonians, Scots, and Saxons, infested the Roman province with incessant incursions, entering at different places and in separate bodies. They had already wasted the country in a dreadful manner, and drawn Nectarius, count of the sea-coast, and Fullofaudes, general of the imperial forces, into an ambush that proved fatal to these commanders and the greatest part of their troops.

Ammian.  
Marc. l. 14.

Valentinian was no sooner made acquainted with this disaster, than he sent Severus, the steward of his household, to reform the abuses which had crept into the administration in Britain, and been productive of such dangerous commotions: but this officer's endeavours proving ineffectual, he was recalled, and succeeded by Jovinus, who finding it impracticable to restore the quiet of the province without a force sufficient to secure it from the insults of the enemy, desired that a strong army might be sent over, without delay, as the only expedient that could save it from ruin. In consequence of this representation, corroborated with

the Dumonii, from Devonshire; and the Brigantines, from Galloway.

The Scots and Scythians must have been prolific and enterprising indeed, if between the year three hundred and six, in which Constantine succeeded his father, and three hundred and sixty-four, they not only peopled and

conquered Ireland, but also peopled forth such colonies into Britain, and composed a separate and powerful monarchy.

† At a Coit, i. e. apud Sylva woodmen, forresters, or savages. See Brit. Glossary.

oth



other accounts describing the deplorable situation of this important province, the emperor bestowed the government of it upon Theodosius, a general of great experience and constant success in war, who was dispatched with a choice body of Roman and auxiliary forces. At his arrival in London, he found the country wasted and over-run by the Franks and Saxons, who had landed on the coast opposite to Gaul, and were now dispersed in small bodies, plundering and burning the villages and plantations: he forthwith divided his troops into small detachments, and falling upon those freebooters encumbered with pillage, routed and cut them in pieces, before they had time to re-assemble; then restoring the spoil to the right owners, returned in triumph to London, where he was received as an hero and deliverer.

An. Ch 364.  
Valentinian  
confers the  
command in  
Britain upon  
Theodosius.

As those he had vanquished were only allies of the nations which this province chiefly dreaded, he resolved to make preparations for an expedition against the Caledonians, and in the mean time endeavoured by private emissaries to sow the seeds of dissension between them and the Attacotti or Silures. When he enquired into the administration of the province, he was not at all surprised to find discontent and disaffection among the people: he therefore promised a speedy redress of grievances; he published a general amnesty and pardon to all the revolvers who should repair to his standard; sent for a celebrated justiciary to preside in the civil magistracy, and appointed Dulcitius, a commander of great reputation, as his lieutenant in the field. These precautions being taken, he advanced against the Caledonians, who had overspread the northern parts of the province like a deluge, defeated them in several encounters, drove them before him into their own country, repaired and rebuilt the forts and castles they had damaged and demolished;

He defeats  
the Caledo-  
nians.

An.Ch.364. demolished; and by convincing them of his superiority over them in the arts and operations of war, paved the way for an honourable and lasting peace.

In the midst of all his glory and success, he had well nigh fallen a sacrifice to a conspiracy hatched by one Valentinus, a native of Pannonia, who had been, for his turbulent spirit and desperate ambition, banished to Britian, which was at that time a general place of exile; there associating with outlaws of the same stamp, he formed the design of seizing the government, and had already debauched a good number of soldiers from their allegiance.

Theodosius being informed of these machinations, ordered the ringleaders to be delivered into the hands of justice; and these being executed, he exhibited a noble proof of his moderation and sagacity, in suppressing all further enquiry concerning the accomplices; which might have produced dangerous convulsions, at a time when his master's authority was far from being established in this island. Having preserved the public tranquillity by this prudent method of proceeding, he was left at liberty to provide for the security of the barriers: he repaired the walls, re-peopled the cities, re-inforced the garrisons, and restored the antient discipline of the army. The country lying between the walls of Severus and Lollius Urbicus, he erected into a separate province, which was denominated Valentia, after the reigning emperor, and ruled by a distinct deputy; and lastly, he punished an order of men called Areani, who, though instituted to give notice of the enemy's motions, had lately acted as spies for the barbarians. The peace and security of the Roman government being thus re-established, he retired to the continent, and was received by the emperor with all the honours due to his merit and services; which the senate likewise acknowledged, by decreeing a statue to be erected

and re-establishes the quiet and security of the Roman province.

erected to his memory, and placed among those of An Ch. 364.  
their most illustrious ancestors.

Though we do not know the particular methods he took to accomplish those great ends, we are assured by Claudian, and Latinus Pacatus Drepanius, in his panegyric upon this great man, that he prevailed upon Valentinian to lighten the exorbitant tribute which had been imposed upon the Britons; and equipped a powerful navy, with which he maintained the empire of the sea, and in particular Panegy. of Theod. Zosym. l. 4. scourged the German and Hyperborean oceans of those Saxon fleets which had done such mischief on almost all the coasts of Europe. Britain, thus secured from external insults, and settled within herself on an happy footing, by the wise regulations of Theodosius, enjoyed some years of peace and felicity, until ambition intervened to disturb her quiet, and she laid the foundation of her own ruin, by espousing the cause of an usurper.

Valentinian dying, was succeeded in the western Gratian succeeds to the western empire. empire by Gratian, a young voluptuary, who neglected the affairs of the state, and was so unhappy in the choice of his favourites, that he admitted a few renegado Alani into his confidence, and employed them in affairs of the utmost importance, without any regard to his own officers, who resented his neglect, and waited only for a convenient opportunity to manifest their discontent. The Roman army in Britain was at that time commanded by a general, who did not fail to encourage this disposition. His name was Maximus, and being by An. Ch. 375. birth a Spaniard, he pretended to be a relation of Theodosius; he possessed many good qualities, by which he had acquired the love and esteem of the soldiery; but these were all sullied by his ambition.

He had served in Britain with reputation, and Maximus declared emperor in Britain. when Gratian declared Theodosius, son of this great general

An.Ch. 375. general, emperor of the East, he thought himself as worthy of the imperial dignity, because he and the other had maintained the same rank in the army. Finding the soldiers averse to Gratian's government, and ripe for any revolution, he took advantage of the influence he had acquired among them, and suffered himself to be declared emperor. In this quality he conciliated the affections of the Britons, by taking the field and vigorously repulsing the Picts and Scots, who had renewed their ravages, according to their constant practice in the beginning of a new emperor's reign. Nay he took a more effectual method to secure the Roman province from any future invasion: he found means to detach the Picts from their alliance with the Scottish nation; which last was so hard pressed by a new confederacy of the Romans, Britons, and their old friends the Caledonians, that it was obliged to abandon the island and take shelter in Ireland and the lesser British isles, while a good part fled for refuge to the continent.

Drains the province of its best men, and passes over to the continent.

All the Scottish historians describe this revolution; which (if it really happened) seems much more likely to have been effected by Theodosius than by this Maximus, whose residence in Britain, after he had assumed the purple, was of too short a duration, to justify the supposition of having brought about such a remarkable event. Whatever may have been his efforts and success on this occasion, he certainly believed himself too firmly established upon the throne, to dread the power of any competitor; and unhappily for this island, resolved to assert his claim upon the continent. For this purpose he raised a considerable army of Britons, joined to the Roman forces withdrawn from the barrier, and embarking them on board of his fleet, set sail for the mouth of the Rhine, where he was immediately joined by the legions quartered in that neighbour-

bourhood



bourhood, and his title acknowledged by all the Roman troops in Germany. In all probability he would not have found himself in a condition to support his pretensions, by means of such a British army, had not he recommended himself to the inhabitants of this island, in an especial manner, by espousing Helena, the daughter of Cadwan, a considerable chieftain of North-Wales; an alliance by which he acquired the interest of her relations, who hoped, in his son Victor, once more to see a prince of British blood upon the imperial throne.

An.Ch. 375.  
Mon. antiq.  
p. 167.

Gratian began his march at the head of a strong army against the usurper, who with the purple had assumed the name of Flavius Clemens Maximus; but being betrayed by his generals, and deserted by his troops, this unfortunate emperor fled towards Lyons, and was slain by Andragathius: so that the other remained in quiet possession of the western empire, which he might have enjoyed in tranquillity, could he have curbed the insolence of his disposition, and soothed, instead of irritating Theodosius; for, his good fortune enabled him likewise to drive Valentinian out of Italy.

Zosymus,  
l. 4.

That prince, far from being intimidated by his threats and success, advanced against him with an army of veterans, accustomed to conquer under his command, defeated him in two pitched battles, and taking him near Aqueleia, caused him to be put to death, after he had five years usurped the imperial dignity. Then he reversed and annulled all the edicts published, and honours conferred by Maximus, and restored Valentinian to the imperial sovereignty of the western empire. Andragathius, who commanded a fleet in the Mediterranean, no sooner received the news of these events, than he threw himself over board in despair; Victor, who had been declared Cæsar, and resided in Gaul, was slain by Arbogastes, and the British forces, left for

Maximus is  
vanquished  
and put to  
death by or-  
der of Theo-  
dosius.

An.Ch. 378. the security of his person and government, retired to the sea-coast, and settled in Armorica, which is now known by the name of Bretagne\*. Be that as it will, Theodosius, in the midst of all his hurry and occupation, did not neglect the affairs of Britain, to which he sent over Chrysantus, who, in the station of vicar-general, or deputy, put a stop to the depredations of the Scots, and acquired great glory by his wise administration in this island.

The Roman empire was, after several revolutions of government, at last united in the person of Theodosius; and that prince left it divided between his two sons, Arcadius and Honorius; Britain, as part of the western division, falling to the latter, as yet a minor under the tuition of Stilico. This minister took immediate measures for curbing the insolence of the North Britons, who had now for the second time fallen upon the unfurnished province, since Maximus departed with the troops that used to defend the barrier.

Stilico sends Victorinus to command the British province.

The South Britons, thus left naked to the ravages of the enemy, had already sued for succours to the Romans, who sent a reinforcement for their relief†. Upon the second irruption of the Picts and Scots, they made another application of the same nature to Stilico, who sent Victorinus to their assistance; and this general drove the invaders beyond the wall of Severus: but the provincial Britons did not long

\* This settlement, concerning which the Greek and Latin authors are silent, is mentioned by Carte, on the testimony of a British writer called Lhowarch-Hen, prince of Cumberland, who lived within one hundred and forty years of this period.

† Neil Nao Gaillic, chief of the Irish monarchs, is said to have landed in the west of England, at this period, and to have ravaged the country as far as the

sea-coast opposite to Gaul; and it was in order to repel this invader, that Stilico sent a legion into Britain. Nor was this the first time the Irish had attacked those parts of the island that were under the dominion of the Romans; for, in a former descent, they had taken St. Patrick prisoner, in the sixteenth year of his age, in the province of Valentia, not far from Arecluyd or Dunbritton.

Sacrar. Hist. Ecclesiæ.

enjoy

enjoy the fruits of this general's care and success; An.Ch. 387. for in a few years, Rome itself being threatened by the Goths; Stilico was obliged to recal the troops from Britain, in order to preserve the capital itself from the arms of those barbarians.

This was an opportunity which the North Britons did not fail to seize: no longer awed by the neighbourhood of the Roman forces, they renewed their incursions in such a torrent, that the dispirited Britons, unable to withstand their impetuosity, had recourse to Honorius, whom they solicited for assistance, while his own officers in the province laid before him the desperate state of his affairs in Britain. In answer to these representations, they received nothing but a letter from the emperor, exhorting them to take arms for their own defence; inasmuch as he could not at that time afford them a reinforcement.

Bereft of all hopes from that quarter, the Britons resolved to erect themselves into an independent government, and proceeded to the election of an emperor; which was determined in favour of one Marcus, who, disappointing their expectation, was put to death by his constituents: then their choice fell upon Gratian, a native of the country; who, after a reign of four months, underwent the fate of his predecessor, and was succeeded by Constantine, who wanted neither talents, activity, nor resolution.

The Britons  
chuse emperors of their  
own.

His first care was to raise a strong body of the natives, for the security of the kingdom against the inroads of the barbarians; and had he confined his sway within the limits of the province, he might have reigned with great tranquility and reputation; but his ambition overleaped such narrow boundaries, and he resolved to make himself master of the whole western empire: for this purpose he, in imitation of Constantius, whom he resembled in character

An.Ch.387. character and fortune, enrolled in his army all the British youth that were able to carry arms; and landing with them at Boulogne, had the pleasure to see his cause espoused by all the imperial forces in Gaul and Germany. On this occasion he conferred the title of Cæsar on his eldest son Constans, whom he sent into Spain, which was easily reduced.

Constantine  
is routed by  
Sarus.

Not but that his father received some checks in the course of his expedition; his army was routed by Sarus, whom Stilico sent to oppose his progress, and he himself pursued and besieged in the city of Valence in Dauphiné; but he was relieved by the approach of Edobechus a Frank, and Gerontius a Briton, who had marched to his assistance; and Sarus obliged to retire with precipitation. He afterwards found means to engage Alavichus, the chief general of Honorius, in a plot to betray his master, and in confidence of its success advanced as far as Verona; but the conspiracy being detected, and the traitor put to death, he returned to Gaul with great confusion and disgrace. By this time he had disobliterated his best friend Gerontius, who set up Maximus, a kinsman of his own, for emperor; and heading a body of barbarians that hovered about the Pyrenees, attacked and slew Constans at Vienne: then he proceeded against Constantine, whom he invested in the city of Arles; but Constantius arriving at that juncture with the army of Honorius, he was deserted by his troops, and reduced to the necessity of taking away his own life. Nor did Constantine reap any advantage from his death; for the army of Germans brought by Edovicius to his relief, being routed by Constantius, he endeavoured to save his life by receiving holy orders and professing the priesthood; but notwithstanding this expedient, he was apprehended and put to death by order of the emperor Honorius.

Put to death  
by order of  
Honorius,  
An.Ch.411.  
Cod.Theod.  
Chron. l. 1.

After



After the death of Honorius, who was succeeded in the empire by his nephew Valentinian III. the Picts and Scots seeing the southern parts of Britain altogether defenceless, resolved to make a conquest of the whole country, and settle it with their own people; for there was at this time no garrison in Britain, the legion formerly sent by Honorius to their relief having been recalled. The Britons, having received advice of this intended invasion, importuned Valentinian with the most lamentable petitions for assistance; and Ætius his general, who commanded in Gaul, dreading the irreparable loss of that province, supplied them with another legion, which defeated the Picts and Scots, in several encounters, rescued the captives they had made, and not only expelled them from South Britain, but even drove them beyond the farthest limits of Valentia, which was considered as a part of the Roman province. After this successful expedition they returned in triumph to the continent, having first advised the Britons to rebuild and refortify the wall of Antoninus, between the friths of Forth and Clyde.

The Scots and Picts defeated by a Roman legion.

This forlorn people, however, had been so drained of their artists by Maximus and Constantine, who transported all their able workmen to the continent, that they could not repair the wall \* with any other materials than sods and turf; nor indeed could it have been of great service, had they been able to execute it in a more masterly manner, as the Scots had by this time plenty of small vessels, which they learned from the Irish to manage with

The Romans abandon the island.

An. Ch. 446.

\* We are told by Fordun the Scottish historian, that this wall was demolished by one Graim, who after the death of Fergus, who had married his daughter, acted as regent of the kingdom during the minority of his grandson. The wall, he says, began at a village called Karelín, and extending two and twenty miles across the Isthmus, ended near Kirkpatrick, on the river Clyde; and was after this irruption distinguished by the name of Graim's dyke, which it retains to this day.

great

**An. Ch. 446.** great dexterity. By means of these they wasted themselves over the firths in shoals, and diffused terror and desolation over the whole country; so that the Britons again applied to Rome for relief, and were again assisted by a single legion, which, under the command of Gallio, compelled the enemy to retire with rout and confusion. But, the Roman empire on the continent being, by this time, overspread with an inundation of barbarous people from the North, the emperor could not afford to leave any part of his troops in Britain; and Gallio was recalled immediately after he had repulsed the enemy. This general, however, did not forsake the Britons, until he had prevailed upon them to contract themselves within the confines of England, leaving the district of Valentia, which they could not defend, as a bone of contention to their northern enemies; and convinced them of the necessity of repairing the wall of Severus, which was by this time lined with cities from sea to sea: he at the same time advised them to build castles on those parts of the coast at which they chiefly apprehended invasions, and having furnished them with patterns, by which they might fabricate arms for their own defence, he took his last farewell of Britain, to which the Romans never returned \*.

Bede, l. i.

\* Before we take our leave of the Romans, the reader will not be displeased to see a list of the several civil and military officers and magistrates appointed for the maintenance of the Roman government in Britain; extracted from the Notitia published by Pancirollus.

Under the Vicegerent of Britain, were the consular governors of Maxima Cæsariensis and Valentia; and the prædial governors of Britannia

prima; Britannia secunda; Flavia Cæsariensis.

The Vicegerent's court was composed of

A principal officer of the agents, chosen out of the Ducenarii, or under-officers.

A principal clerk or secretary,

Two chief accomptants or auditors,

A chief jailor.

A notary.

A secretary for dispatches.

As

An assistant or surrogate.  
Under-assistants.  
Clerks for appeals.  
Serjeants and other inferior officers.

Under the Count of the Saxon shore  
in Britain were,

The commander of a detachment of  
Fortenses, at Othona.

The commander of the Tungrian sol-  
diers, at Dover.

The commander of a detachment of  
Tournay soldiers, at Lyme.

The commander of the Dalmatian  
horse, stiled Branodunensis, at  
Brancafer in Norfolk.

The commander of the Stableian  
horse, stiled Gariannonensis, at  
Burrough-castle near Yarmouth.

The tribune of the first cohort of Ve-  
tasians, at Reculver.

The commander of the second legion,  
called Augusta, at Richborough.

The commander of a detachment of  
the Abulci, at Anderida.

The commander of a detachment of  
scouts, at Portsmouth.

The court of the Count consisted of  
A principal officer from the court of  
the general of foot, in ordinary  
attendance.

Two auditors from the same.

A master jailor from the same.

A clerk.

An assistant.

An under-assistant.

A register.

Clerks of appeals.

Serjeants and other officers.

Under the government of the Count  
of Britain,

The province of Britain,

The court consisting of

A principal officer from the court of  
the general of foot, in ordinary at-  
tendance, relieved yearly.

A master jailor.

Two auditors from the courts above-  
mentioned.

An assistant,

An under-assistant.

Clerks of appeals.

Serjeants and other officers.

Under the government of the Duke of  
Britain,

The præfect of the sixth legion, at  
York.

The præfect of the Dalmatian horse,  
at Broughton in Lincolnshire.

The præfect of the Crispian horse, at  
Doncaster.

The præfect of a body of Cuirassiers,  
at Templeburgh.

The præfect of a detachment of the  
Barcarii Tigrisensis, at Moresby.

The præfect of a detachment of the  
Nervii, called Dictensis, at Amble-  
side.

The præfect of a detachment of sol-  
diers, employed on the watch at  
Kendal.

The præfect of a detachment of scouts,  
at Bowes.

The præfect of a detachment, stiled  
Directores, at Brugh.

The præfect of a detachment, called  
Defensores, at Overborough.

The præfect of a detachment of Solen-  
ses, at Greta-Bridge.

The præfect of a detachment of Pa-  
censes, at Piera-Bridge.

The præfect of a detachment of Lon-  
govicarii, at Lancaster.

The præfect of a detachment, stiled  
Derivationensis, at a station on the  
river Derwent, and along the line  
of the wall.

The tribune of the fourth cohort of the  
Lergi, at Cousinhouse.

The tribune of a cohort of the Corno-  
vii, at Newcastle.

The præfect of the first wing of the  
Asti, at Benwell-hill.

The tribune of the first cohort of the  
Friscagi, at Rutchester.

The

The præfect of the wing stiled Savi-  
niani, at Halton chesters.

The præfect of the second wing of the  
Asti, at Walwick-chesters.

The tribune of the first cohort of the  
Batavi, at Carrawbrugh.

The tribune of the first cohort of the  
Tungri, at House-fleeds.

The tribune of the fourth cohort of the  
Gauls, at Little-chesters.

The tribune of the first cohort of the  
Asti, at Great-chesters.

The tribune of the second cohort of  
Dalmatians, at Carvoran.

The tribune of the first cohort of Da-  
cians, called Aelia, at Burdofwald.

The præfect of the wing called Pe-  
triana, at Cambeck-fort.

The præfect of a detachment of  
Moors, stiled Aurelian, at Watch-  
cross.

The tribune of the second cohort of  
the Lergi, at Stanwicks.

The tribune of the first cohort of Spa-  
niards, at Brugh.

The tribune of the second cohort of  
Thracians, at Drumbrugh.

The tribune of the first marine co-  
hort, stiled Aelia, at Boulness.

The tribune of the first cohort of the  
Morini, at Lanchester.

The tribune of the third cohort of the  
Nervii, at Whitley-castle.

A body of men in armour, at Old Pen-  
rith, or Brampton.

The præfect of the first wing, called  
Herculea, at Old Carlisle, or Elen-  
borough.

The tribune of the sixth cohort of the  
Nervii, at the same place.

The Duke's court was composed of

A principal officer from the courts of  
the generals, in ordinary attend-  
ance, changed yearly.

Chief jailors from both.

Auditors yearly from both.

An assistant.

Under-assistant.

Register.

Clerks of appeals.

Serjeants and other officers.



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*E. Hayman inv. et del.*

*A. Walker sculp.*

*The Druids, or the Conversion of y<sup>e</sup> Britons to Christianity*

## OF THE CHURCH.

**B**Efore we close this important period of the British history, we shall give a succinct detail of the progress which the Christian religion had made from its first dawn in this island to the present time, when the country was finally abandoned by the Romans. As for the account given by William of Malmesbury, concerning the translation of Joseph of Arimathea to the church of Glassenbury, it bears such palpable marks of imposture, that we shall reject it as a monkish fable, unworthy of refutation. Nevertheless, that the seeds of Christianity were sown in Britain, even in the most early age of the church, appears from the testimony of Eusebius, an inquisitive writer, in great credit with the first emperor Constantine. He positively says that the apostles crossed the ocean, and arrived at the British isles: and Theodoret, who was a bishop in the fifth century, expressly mentions the Britons as a people whom St. Paul converted to Christianity. An assertion that seems to be justified by Clemens Romanus contemporary with the apostles, who gives us to understand that St. Paul preached to the utmost bounds of the West, the common expression applied in those times to the British islands. Whether this great propagator of the gospel was ever personally in this country, or (which is more probable) sent thither some of his disciples to preach the doctrines of his master, we may fairly conclude, that this religion had gained a number of proselytes, as early as the defeat of Bonduica by Suetonius; for, Pomponia Græcina, wife of Aulus Plautius the legate of Claudius, had embraced it, and (as we are informed by Tacitus) was accused of foreign superstition. The example of a lady in such distinguished

The gospel  
preached in  
Britain, even  
in the ear-  
liest times of  
Christianity.

Embraced  
by two ladies  
of distin-  
guished  
rank.

tinguished rank, professing a religion so pure and benevolent, could hardly fail to extend the doctrine among the Britons, who were noted alike for innocence and docility. Nor was this in all likelihood the only fair patroness of this religion in Britain; for, there is great reason to believe that the Claudia mentioned by St. Paul in his epistles, was the same British lady afterwards celebrated by the poet Martial; inasmuch as the apostle, in his second epistle to Timothy, takes notice of Claudia and Pudens: and Martial names this very Pudens as the husband of Claudia Rufina. These, however, were only private converts to a new doctrine, which was not yet in a condition to cope with the established religion of the country; and though Tertullian, who flourished in the reign of Caracalla, says that Christianity had made its way into Britain, we are not to suppose the country in general was converted; for we learn from Ziphilin, that the promiscuous use of venery still prevailed among the better sort of the inhabitants\*.

We are informed by Bede, that in the reign of Marcus Antonius Verus and his brother Aurelius Commodus, while Eleutherus was bishop of Rome, that Lucius king of the Britons, sent an epistle to this pope, requesting his conversion to Christianity might receive the sanction of his holiness; that he soon reaped the fruit of his pious solicitation; and that his subjects preserved the faith inviolate in peace, till the reign of Dioclesian.

Conjectures  
about Lu-  
cius.

Though some authors deny that ever any such prince existed, because he is not mentioned by the Greek and Latin authors, who have recorded the

\* The wife of a British prince named Argentocoxus being rallied by the empress Julia, about the libertinism of the ladies in Britain, who granted favours promiscuously to different men, "True, says she, we pique ourselves on obliging men of merit, and do with the bravest in public what you practise with the basest in private."

trans-



transactions of those times, the contrary opinion is supported by some antient coins found in Cumberland and Durham, exhibiting a representation of a cross, with the letters LVC; and Monsieur Bouterue gives us the print of another, representing a man's head; and on the reverse a boar and a star, the inscription LVCIO. These circumstances indeed amount to no more than a bare probability; and that representation of the cross, on a medal struck so early as the reign of Commodus, smells strong of monkish imposition.

We do not find that the Christians in Britain were molested in the exercise of religion till the reign of Dioclesian, who being of a jealous disposition, and fearing that the progress of Christianity would interfere with his authority, raised a dreadful persecution against all the professors of this doctrine: a large share of the calamity fell upon Britain, in which the celebrated St. Alban suffered martyrdom, in the manner related by Bede; and this was also the fate of a great many others, among whom Aaron and Julius are particularly mentioned. This persecution raged in the beginning of the fourth century, and ceased when the government of Britain fell into the hands of Constantius Chlorus, who was favourable to the Britons, and not only encouraged them to come forth from the woods and caves in which they had lurked in the preceding reign, but also permitted them to rebuild their churches, and renew the rites of the Christian worship, which they enjoyed without disturbance until they were infected with the Arian heresy.

Dioclesian  
raises a per-  
secution  
against the  
Christians.

That the church was established in this island, soon after the beginning of the fourth century, plainly appears from the history of the council of Arles, to which three British bishops subscribed, by the names of Eborius, Restitutus, and Adelfius de civitate coloniæ Londinensium. The two first

British bi-  
shops assist at  
the council  
of Arles.

No. 3.

I

were

were the prelates of York and London, and the last is by Usher supposed to have been bishop of Colchester, though in all probability he ruled the diocese of Lincoln, which was called Colonia Lindi; and this last word, by a mistake in the transcriber, converted into Londinensium. The decrees of this council were sent by the subscribing bishops, to the pope at Rome; but, far from addressing him as the sovereign of the church and vicar of Jesus Christ, they give him no other epithet in their letter than that of Dear brother: after having observed that they were all united in one bond of charity and love, they say they were at the desire of their pious emperor assembled at Arles, where they should have been glad to meet their brother the bishop of Rome; but, since they could not enjoy that comfort, they had sent an abstract of their canons, which he might publish through his whole diocese.

They are  
summoned  
to the council  
of Nice.

As the British bishops assisted at this assembly, we cannot doubt but that they were also summoned to the succeeding council of Nice, which was convoked by Constantine, who could not be supposed to overlook his own countrymen on such an occasion; though we do not know the precise number of those who went thither, nor indeed of those who were established in Britain. We shall only observe, that all the prelates were conveyed, at the emperor's charge, to this council; which, among other decrees, established the right of ecclesiastical election and jurisdiction in the bishops, as well as the authority of provincial synods; and exempted metropolitans from the jurisdiction of the bishops of Rome, Alexandria, and Antioch. Nor, indeed, is there any one instance in those days, of a pope's consecrating British bishops, summoning them to councils, hearing their causes, receiving appeals, or exercising any legatine authority within the British dominions.

The bishops of Britain were likewise present at the council of Sardis, convened on account of Athanasius, who had been condemned by the eastern bishops. It was at this period that the Roman see began to gain ground, and some decrees of the council seem to favour its usurpation. Yet even these very decrees prove, that it had no original superiority; otherwise to what purpose were they now made? Besides, this council, called Sardica, was guilty of divers unwarrantable practices; nor was it ever deemed œcumenical by the Christian church. As for the council of Ariminum, held in the middle of the fourth century, it was infected with Arianism; but for the honour of our country, it appears from the fragments of Hillary, that the Gallican and British bishops assembling at Paris, after the council of Ariminum, renounced the decrees of that heretical assembly, and confirmed the doctrines of the Nicene faith. Let it also be remembered, for the glory of that pure and primitive church, that three of the British prelates, assisting at this council, were obliged to accept of the emperor's allowance, because they were not able to defray the expence of their own maintenance, and too conscientious to live upon their brethren.

Are present  
at the council  
of Sardis  
and Arimi-  
num.

Though our bishops were extremely orthodox at this juncture, Britain was not altogether devoid of free-thinkers; for, in the course of this very century, she produced the noted Pelagius, whose real name is said to have been Morgan. He was a man of acute discernment, and great subtlety in reasoning. His doctrine, which at first got footing in Gaul, was thence imported into this country, where it met with a favourable reception, and in all probability was the more readily embraced, as the author of it was a Briton, and a person of unblemished morals, and as it contained nothing re-

Pelagius a  
native of  
Britain.

pugnant to common sense, or the fundamental principles of the christian religion \*.

Nevertheless, the progress of this heresy alarmed the Gallican church to such a degree, that they sent over two eminent bishops to reclaim those who had imbibed such dangerous errors, and to confirm the rest of the nation in their adherence to the true faith. These venerable missionaries were joyfully received by the clergy, and a public disputation ensued at Verulam, where the heretics were confuted, to the unspeakable satisfaction of all orthodox believers.

Bede,  
l. i. c. 17.

\* He maintained that man might be righteous without the assistance of grace, which was bestowed in proportion to his virtue; that man could arrive at a state of perfection in which he could be no longer subject to passion or to sin; that there is no original sin; and that infants dying before baptism will not be damned.

BRITONS



## BRITONS AND SAXONS.

An Ch. 446.

The helpless  
and forlorn  
situation of  
the Britons.

**A**FTER the departure of the Romans from this island, the Britons, like an helpless family deprived of their parent and protector, resigned themselves to their fate with a listlessness of despondence, that denoted their degeneracy from the valour of their ancestors. Far from practising the lessons they had received from Gallio, they aggravated their misfortunes with unavailing complaints, which served only to augment and propagate their despair; and when they were driven to the necessity of making immediate efforts for their preservation, they acted with such sloth, stupidity, and distraction, as entirely defeated the purposes of their labour. The Romans had long ago deprived them of their princes, destroyed the power and independency of their clanships, abolished their old laws, customs, and religion, gradually dissolved the ties of subordination and attachment, by which their antient dynasties subsisted; and altered the whole form of their constitution. All those who had been concerned in the administration were foreigners, by whom they were now deserted; so that they found themselves in the condition of a ship deprived of her pilot, exposed to the mercy of the next tempest that may chance to blow. All their warriors had been transported into foreign countries, where they shed their blood in the cause of strangers, while ruin poured over their own country, which their valour might have saved. In a word, they had no chief of influence and capacity sufficient to unite their councils, regulate their designs, and exert that authority which alone could oblige them to take proper measures for the safety of the common-weal. They were destitute of artists,

An.Ch.446. and even of materials for the fabric of weapons to annoy the foe, and so accustomed to range over their forests, heaths and mountains, that when cooped up in forts and castles, they drooped and languished like captives in confinement, and seemed to lose all sense of glory, and all spirit of opposition.

This defection was no secret to their enemies, whose views and ambition dilated accordingly. The union of the Picts and Scots, which was formerly the casual junction of petty clans, without order, discipline, or preconcerted design, had now become a powerful confederacy of two warlike nations. Fergus, whom the Scottish writers call the second of that name, had arrived from Denmark in Braidaibin, with a great multitude of his countrymen, who were formerly expelled from Britain\*; and to him resorted an infinite concourse of people from Ireland, who transported themselves in their curroghs, or small boats, to Argyle, which was the country first possessed in Britain by those adventurers. Far from being molested or opposed in this migration by the Picts, it had been previously concerted with those people, who foresaw in such a junction the conquest of the whole island, or at least the recovery of the province called Valentia, lying between the walls of Antoninus and Severus,

\* Giraldus Cambrensis says, that in the reign of Neil Nacaeillie, six sons of Maud, king of Ulster, sailed from Ireland with a large fleet to the north parts of Britain, where they settled with the Scots who followed them in the expedition; and Usher is of opinion, that the eldest of those princes was Reuda, from whom this colony derived the name of Delreudini. They settled long before this period, in Cantire, Knapdale, and Lorn, to the north west of the frith of Clyde and

castle of Dunbritton, which was the strongest fortress of the Britons inhabiting Strathcluyd; and were occasionally reinforced from their native country, so as to become six powerful clans, who probably joined the Picts, and fought as their allies, under their own independent chieftains, without being subject to any supreme sovereign, until they were all united under the monarchy of Fergus, the son of Eric.

Top. Hibern. Dist. 3.

which

which had formerly belonged to them and their allies. They had (as we have already observed) united their forces, and on divers occasions committed terrible depredations on the Britons; but had as often been repulsed by the valour of the Romans: and Fergus had actually lost his life in one of these engagements, leaving a minor to succeed him on the throne; so that, in all probability, nothing of moment would have happened during the minority of this prince, had not the departure of the Romans, and the well-known imbecility of the southern Britons, encouraged them with the hopes of an easy conquest.

Elevated with these conceptions, they took the field in vast numbers, and considering the Britons as their assured prey, spread themselves all over Lothian, in which they met with no opposition. Having then divided the spoil and the lands, according to the previous agreement and disposition they had made, they penetrated into England, and renewed their attacks upon the wall, which was so poorly defended by the Britons, that, instead of using battering rams or other military engines for effecting a breach, they pulled down the inactive defenders with iron hooks, and then undermined the fortification at their leisure. Having thus opened to themselves a passage, they ravaged the whole country with impunity, while the Britons fled before them to the woods and mountains; and as the lands could not be cultivated in such times of danger and distress, a dreadful famine ensued; so that their condition became truly deplorable.

In this emergency they had recourse to Ætius, the celebrated general of Valentinian, who had with great difficulty, by the dint of vast abilities, both as a politician and an officer, prevented his master's empire from being over-run and destroyed

They are invaded by the Scots and Picts, who demolish the wall of Severus.

The Britons solicit Ætius for assistance.

An. Ch. 447. by the Huns and other barbarians, whom he had routed in several encounters.

This gleam of success encouraged the Britons to hope that some regard would be paid to their address, which is said to have run in this miserable strain: "To Ætius, thrice consul, the groans of the Britons---The barbarians drive us to the sea. The sea drives us back to the barbarians; and between both, we have the wretched alternative of being murdered, or drowned!" -- Such, however, were the calamities of the Romans themselves, surrounded by myriads of savage nations threatening to swallow up their empire, that they could yield no assistance to the unhappy Britons; who finding themselves totally abandoned, began to collect courage from despair. Some of them indeed were so abject as to throw themselves upon the mercy of the enemy, to whom they submitted; but by far the greatest part who had retired to their mountains and morasses, became inured to hardships, which steeled their bodies, while they stimulated their revenge. Convinced of the mischiefs that flow from disunion, they endeavoured to erect an authority under which they might act with more vigour and unanimity: but, those among them who had any sort of title to this preheminance, were so factious, turbulent, and contentious, that no sooner was a general or chief elected, than he fell a sacrifice to the ambition of his rivals. Nevertheless, they made several successful sallies upon their invaders, who were actually repulsed by those efforts of resentment and despair; and had they known how to maintain and improve the advantages they gained, they would have had no occasion to call in auxiliaries to their assistance. But an extraordinary abundance succeeding the famine by which they had so grievously suffered, they indulged themselves in riot and debauchery;



so that their minds became enervate, and they degenerated into a total profligacy of manners, which, instead of being restrained, was augmented and encouraged by the example of their clergy.

An Ch. 447.

Bede, l. i.  
Gildas.

Such a relaxation in their morals could not fail of being attended with neglect, disorder, and national timidity: but, these were not the only mischievous consequences of their luxury and abundance; they were visited by a terrible pestilence, by which great numbers perished; and this calamity, added to the other circumstances that concurred to enfeeble the nation, encouraged their watchful neighbours to seize the opportunity of renewing their hostilities and incursions.

In order to oppose the progress of these people, the Britons pitched upon Vortigern as their general and sovereign; a prince who is said to have raised himself to the supreme command by the murder of his predecessor Constantine, brother to the king of Armorica.

They chuse  
Vortigern  
for their  
king.

Whatever the arts may have been which paved the way to his elevation, he was certainly possessed of very few good qualities, and had probably recommended himself to a degenerate age by his immorality and extravagance. He was originally chieftain of the Silures settled in Radnorshire; and had acquired some reputation by his warlike achievements against the enemies of his country: though his martial genius by no means appeared at this juncture, when, instead of exerting the natural strength of the kingdom, which, if properly applied, would have been sufficient to secure it from the designs of the enemy, he placed his dependence upon foreign auxiliaries. By his weakness or knavery, he betrayed his country into the hands of the Saxons, who had, for a century and a half, infested the coast of Britain to such a degree, that the Roman emperors, from the reign  
of

An. Ch. 447. of Dioclesian, maintained a considerable military force, under the count of the Saxon shore, on purpose to secure this island against the descents of those piratical adventurers. Their name they owed either to their original descent from the Sacæ, or to the short swords, termed Sacks or Sceah, which they used in battle. They inhabited Jutland, Angelen, and Holstein, in conjunction with the Jutes and Angles, who joined them in this expedition, and shared the conquest of Britain, in which likewise the Frisians were principally concerned.

Rer. Fref.  
Hist.  
Bede, l. v.  
Sir W.  
Temple's  
Obs. on the  
United Pro-  
vinces.

who calls in  
the Saxons.

Vortigern, exclusive of his fear, was influenced by other motives to solicit the assistance of those rovers. He had been concerned in the murder of some Roman deputies, who were left in Britain after the departure of Gallio; and he was afraid of being deposed and punished for this outrage, should that people triumph over the barbarous nations, and reclaim the British province: besides, he dreaded the interest and pretensions of Ambrosius, a young prince descended from a Roman family, which had given sovereigns to some parts of this island, and now residing in Armorica, to which he had fled from the villainy of Vortigern, by whom his father had been assassinated. These were sufficient inducements for him to call over a people by whom he might be supported in his government and usurpation: but, as he could not take such an important step without the concurrence of the nobility and chieftains, over whom his authority was not yet firmly established, he employed his emissaries to alarm them with the exaggerated accounts of the strength, destination, and rancour of their old enemies the Scots and Picts. Having thus artfully prepared their minds for the proposal, he summoned them to a general council, on pretence of deliberating upon the necessity of the state, and

Gildas.  
Nennius  
Hist. Brit.

and there managed their passions with such dexterity, that they invested him with full power to invite the Saxons into England, and assign to them the isle of Thanet for their habitation. An. Ch. 447.

The Saxons consisted of independent clans, observing the same form of government, though not subject to a monarch or single superior, except in war, when they obeyed a general of their own election: but the government was carried on by a great council of all their chieftains. Such were \* Hengist and Horsa, sons of Wietgelsus, great grandson of the famous Woden, worshipped as the god of war, from whom all the princes of the Saxon heptarchy in England were likewise descended. Those brothers had formerly, in the course of their naval expeditions, landed in Britain, and been hospitably received by Vortigern, who, perhaps, took that opportunity of concerting with them the plan of their future operations.

An. Ch. 452.

Be that as it will, they, in consequence of the solemn invitation received from that prince, arrived with an inconsiderable number, not exceeding fifteen hundred men, and landed at Ebs-flete in the isle of Thanet, where they did not long remain inactive. Vortigern being hardly pressed by his enemies from the North, at that very juncture the Saxons joined his army, which was not a little inspirited by the arrival of such auxiliaries, and marched against the Scots and Picts, who had advanced as far as Stamford in Lincolnshire: a battle ensued, in which the darts and lances of the enemy were found unequal to the axes and scymitars of the Saxons and the Britons, who obtained a complete victory, and recovered all the booty which the vanquished had acquired.

These help him to repel the Scots and Picts.

\* Hengist and Horsa are said to have been born in Westphalia, at a place which still retains the name of Hengisterholt. They derived their names from the device upon their shields, which was a horse, in the German language called indifferently Horsa and Hengist.

After

An. Ch. 452.

and excite  
the jealousy  
of the na-  
tives;

who ex-  
claim  
against their  
king for in-  
viting such  
rapacious  
guests.

After this action, the Saxons returned to the place appointed for their residence, and were supplied with food and raiment at the expence of Vortigern, who would have had no cause to repent of their arrival, could he have kept their number from increasing. But their own country was so populous and barren, and the fertile lands of Britain so agreeable and alluring, that, in a very little time, the brothers were reinforced by five thousand of their countrymen, who arrived in eighteen vessels, with their wives and families. These were augmented daily by fresh supplies to such a formidable number, that the Britons began to see the danger of the step they had taken; and after having expostulated with their mercenaries on the breach of the contract, which restricted them to a certain number, desired them, in a very peremptory manner, to go in quest of another habitation.

At the same time they loudly exclaimed against the tyrant Vortigern, for having introduced such an insatiable crew into their country: and Hengist, who was endowed with a great share of cunning and discernment, did not fail to profit by this spirit of discontent and disaffection. He expatiated to that prince, on the danger to which he was exposed from the hatred of his subjects, the claim of Ambrosius, and the very neighbourhood of the enemy; he represented the necessity of maintaining his government by means of foreign auxiliaries; he insinuated himself into his confidence and esteem; and lastly, demonstrated that the handful of Saxons under his command, could be of little service to him, in case of domestic troubles or invasion. Vortigern, soothed by his insinuations, and alarmed at the prospects he had drawn, contracted close engagements with the two brothers, whom he looked upon as the support of his administration, and even importuned them to send for another swarm of their country.



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*Vortigern King of Britain espouses Rowena a Saxon  
which occasioned the Settlement of the Saxons in Britain*

countrymen; which accordingly arrived in forty vessels. The infatuation of the British king is said to have been encreased by his passion for Rowena, daughter of Hengist, whose beauty captivated his heart, at a banquet to which he was invited for that purpose. We are told by Nennius, that he not only married this young Saxon lady, though he had another wife alive, but even purchased her consent, by putting her countrymen in possession of the fertile plains of Kent, which lay favourable for their marine expeditions.

The Saxons, being by this time strong enough to avow their ambitious designs, industriously sought occasion to quarrel with the Britons, pretending that their pay was not regularly advanced, nor their provisions furnished in sufficient quantity, according to the stipulations of their contract. They therefore demanded that those grievances should be immediately redressed, otherwise they would do themselves justice; and in the mean time they engaged in a treaty with the Picts, that they might be in a condition to cope with the whole power of the British nation. This alliance was effected by the means of those Saxons who had settled in \* Northumberland: and while it was upon the anvil, Hengist began to commit hostilities, by ravaging the country in the south. What part Vortigern acted on this occasion is uncertain; but, in all probability, he remained in a state of neu-

A rupture  
ensues;

\* Northumberland was settled by the Angli, who lived between Jutland and the Saxons, but universally deserted their antient habitation, to partake with their countrymen of the fertile provinces of Britain. They were commanded by Oeta, and by the permission of Vortigern took possession of Northumberland and Cumberland, which were overgrown with woods, and very thinly inhabited,

These very people are said to have fixed their colony in the Orkneys, from whence this Oeta removed them to the north of England; and in process of time, they extended themselves into Lothian as far as Edinburgh, which they possessed above one hundred and twenty years, according to Vaughan's remarks upon the British chronology.

trality,



An. Ch. 452.  
and Vortimer takes  
the command of the  
Britons,

trality, owing to the importunities and influence of his Saxon wife. For this reason he was grown into such contempt with his subjects, that they transferred their allegiance to his son Vortimer, the fruits of his first marriage; and taking up arms under the banner of this active prince, defeated the Saxons at Derwent, before they could reap any benefit from their northern alliance. The next battle was fought at Aylesford in Kent, with equal obstinacy on both sides, Horsa being killed by Vortimer, whose brother Cautigern had fallen by the hands of that Saxon chief; and both armies claimed the victory, though neither had reason to boast of their success. The remaining part of the campaign produced nothing but slight skirmishes; and the season being far advanced, Hengist made a voyage to his own country, to negotiate a reinforcement that might enable him to take the field in the spring with a good prospect of advantage. At the same time the Britons had recourse to their friends in Armorica, who sent over Ambrosius, at the head of some troops, to their assistance.

Vortigern is  
deposed;

Nenn. Cam-  
den. hist.  
Hunt.

Vortigern was by this time become a contemptible partisan of the Saxons, and so immersed in vice and debauchery, that St. Germanus, deputy of the Gallican church in Britain, reprimanded him severely for his adultery and dissolute course of life, which, as he took no pains to reform, he was solemnly anathematized in a council of the British clergy, and his subjects absolved from their oath of allegiance.

Immediately after the death of Horsa the sole command of the Saxons centered in Hengist, who now assumed the title of king of Kent, and perhaps was complimented with the regal power by the general assembly, as the reward of his valour, by which they had acquired such an agreeable settlement. No transaction of moment has marked the



the year that succeeded the battle of Aylesford; but the next campaign was distinguished by a general engagement at Folkstone in Kent, where the Saxons were worsted, and Vortimer, in all probability, would have improved his success, had he not been anticipated by untimely death.

An. Ch. 457.

The Britons, being thus deprived of their gallant chief, and still retaining some attachment to his father, who was in the hands of the Saxons, ransomed him at the price of London, which they yielded to Hengist, and set Vortigern again upon the throne. But his sovereignty was of short duration, if we may credit the British historians, who say, that Hengist, dreading the event of the war, expressed an uncommon desire of peace; and, on pretence of accommodating all disputes, persuaded the British nobility to meet him and his chieftains on Salisbury-plain, where, after they had feasted together, the Saxons, at a certain signal, drew their poignards, which they had concealed for the purpose, and butchered all the British lords to the number of three hundred.

but resumes  
the govern-  
ment upon  
Vortimer's  
death.

Wm. of  
Malmesb.  
Verstegan.

Though this relation seems to be copied from Witichindus, a Saxon historian, who says, such a scene was acted in Germany, not long before that period, between the Saxons and Thuringians; a massacre of the same kind might have happened in two different countries, and indeed the knowledge of the first might have suggested the same expedient to Hengist, had he thought himself in such a dangerous situation as could in any shape have excused a measure of such baseness and barbarity. But at this conjuncture he was under no necessity to take perfidious methods of ensuring his success: Vortimer, the most formidable of all his opponents, was dead, and the sovereign rule among the Britons had returned to Vortigern, a weak irresolute prince, despised by the majority of his subjects, who

Reflection  
on the story  
of the mas-  
sacre of the  
English no-  
blemen by  
Hengist.

An.Ch.457. who were, at the same time, divided among themselves: while the Saxon king had all the reason in the world to expect considerable succours from his alliance with the North Britons. Let us therefore, rather than suppose him guilty of such an enormous treachery, conclude, that he confided in his own strength and the imbecility of the Britons, whom he afterwards routed in the battle of Cruan-ford or Creyford, near Dartford, having slain four thousand of their men, and among these some of their best officers. By this victory he was left in quiet possession of Kent; and, in all probability, he, in conjunction with his Caledonian allies, ravaged the other parts of England, until the Britons sued for peace, which confirmed to him by treaty the possession of his Kentish dominions.

Vortigern is  
succeeded in  
the sovereignty  
by  
Ambrosius  
Aurelius.

As for Vortigern, despised and neglected on all hands, he retired to his own town in Radnorshire, which being burnt by his enemies, in hope that he would perish in the flames, he fled for refuge to an almost inaccessible retreat\*, at the foot of the mountain Rivel, near Caernarvon, where he spent the remainder of his life in continual terror and anxiety. The throne being thus vacated, the Britons resolved to elect another sovereign; and their choice fell upon Ambrosius Aurelius, who eminently distinguished himself in the wars of the Saxons; and already exercised the supreme authority over a society in Wales, composed of such Britons as had fled thither from the devastations of the Picts and Scots. This new monarch, descended from the old race of the British kings, was

\* There was but one avenue to this retreat, over the mountain, so narrow as to admit only three persons to walk a-breast with difficulty. It is still called Bwlch-Guortigern, i. e. Vortigern's passage; there is likewise a hill covered with a heap of stones,

known by the name of Bedn Guortigern, the grave of Vortigern; which the inhabitants of Llanhaynon, digging up a few years ago, found a stone coffin, containing the skeleton of a very tall man. Vide Kennet's Paroch. Antiq.

was no sooner vested with the sovereign command, An.Ch.457. than he resolved to retrieve all the lands which had been reft from his subjects by the encroaching Saxons: with this view he took the fie'd, and his endeavours must have been crowned with success against Hengift and his son Esca, whom he had by this time associated as his colleague; for he had penetrated into the very farthest part of their possessions in the isle of Thanet \*, where he fought the battle near Wippedes fleet, in which twelve British commanders were slain; whereas, the Saxons lost but one officer of note, from whom the field derived its name. The damage, however, they An.Ch.465. sustained in this action was so great, that they had no stomach to continue the war, which the Britons being as little able to prosecute, a cessation of hostilities ensued; and these last enjoyed an interval of repose; though this too was disturbed by a commotion raised in the North, at the instigation of Pascentius, the surviving son of Vortigern, who laid claim to the sovereignty in right of his father: but his party being suppressed by Ambrosius, he is said to have fled into Ireland, from whence he afterwards returned, and was allowed to enjoy his hereditary estate and privileges; for his father had been no other than chief to a tribe, when he was Gildas.Bede, Nennius. elevated to the supreme command.

Ambrosius, being rid of all rivalship, resolved to regulate the perplexed affairs of his dominions:

\* The account of the victory obtained over the Saxons and Picts, at Mould in Flintshire, by means of bishop Germanus, deputy of the Gallic church, has so much the air of a monkish fable, that it hardly deserves the least historical notice. That the Britons should obtain a victory by repeating the word Hallelujah, in a valley surrounded with rocks that reverberated the sound, so as to intimidate

the enemy, is altogether incredible. But nothing is more likely than that, in the course of this war, they might defeat their enemies, by following the advice of Germanus, who, before he assumed the crossier, had wielded the sword, in the character of prince and duke of Anserre; and, as Constantius observed, had abandoned the battles of the earth, in order to pursue the warfare of heaven.

An.Ch.465.  
He convokes  
a council at  
York, and  
regulates  
the affairs  
of the state.

for this purpose, he convoked a general assembly of the princes and nobles at York, where measures were concerted for re-establishing the churches and restoring the tranquillity of Britain. Then he marched with an army to London, which in all likelihood still remained in the hands of the Saxons, whom he expelled, and from thence made a progress to Winchester and Salisbury, where he restored the British interest and dominion: it was on this expedition that he was solemnly crowned at Stonehenge; and this part of the country was the place of his residence and burial, as appears from the word Ambresbury, which is the name of a town in the neighbourhood of Salisbury-plain.

The tranquillity which Britain now enjoyed was owing rather to the weakness than the pacific disposition of its enemies: for no sooner did Hengist and his son Esca find themselves in a condition to recommence hostilities, either in consequence of having received a reinforcement from Saxony, or of civil dissensions among the Britons, than they took the field again, and laying waste the country, compelled the inhabitants to fly before their arms: perhaps they were encouraged to make this incursion by the indisposition of Ambrosius, who could not at that time command his troops in person.

An.Ch.473.

Enters into  
a league  
with the  
Scots.

This excellent prince, who was a sound politician as well as a consummate warrior, foreseeing a very troublesome opposition, should the Saxons settled in Northumberland extend their possessions so as to be able to unite occasionally with their brethren of Kent, contrived a very effectual expedient to keep those northern invaders employed at home, by projecting a plan of alliance with the Scots, independent of the Picts, who were the staunch friends and confederates of the Saxons. Those two nations had already begun to be infected with mutual jealousy and distrust, and many disputes had happened between



between them about the division of the lands and plunder which they had ravished from the Britons; so that their friendship was in the wane, when Ambrosius made his proposals to the Scots, who found them too advantageous to be rejected. He ceded to them the lands between the friths; and they engaged to harass the northern Saxons with incessant irruptions. They performed their part of the contract with incredible alacrity and perseverance, because they found their account in pillaging a rich industrious people by surprize; and this alliance with Ambrosius, but especially the cession of the Regnum Cumbrense, was productive of a long and bloody war between the Scots and Picts, which ended in the extirpation of the latter, and even in the extinction of the name; while the Britons underwent the same fate from their Saxon conquerors \*.

An.Ch.473.

Ferdun,

In about three years after the last incursion of the Saxons under Hengist and Esca, another band of those adventurers, commanded by Ælla and his three sons, landed in Suffex; and having defeated the Britons who attempted to oppose them, took possession of all the maritime parts of this country, while the natives fled for shelter to the forest of Anderida. Thus he laid the foundation of the kingdom of the South Saxons, which afterwards included the forest, together with the greatest part of Surry: but, this monarchy was not established without great difficulty and bloodshed; for the

An.Ch.477.

Ælla and his three sons land in Suffex;

\* At this period Merlin, the British prophet and inchanter, rendered himself famous in Britain. By the British writers he is called Merdhin Emrys, and Embreys Glentic. He was supposed to be the son of an incubus, and all the monkish historians brand him with the appellation of wizard. Buchanan imagines him to have been an impostor, who found his account in publishing pretended predictions couched in equivocal expression, like the ancient oracles: but Lhwyd, the antiquary, describes him as a sensible man, who, for his learning and skill in the mathematics, was counted as something preternatural in those days of ignorance and credulity.

An.Ch.477. Britons would not part with their possessions till  
and fight the battle of Maer-cre-  
des-burn.

Sax. Chron.

after an obstinate opposition, in the course of which they fought several battles with various success, particularly that of Maer-credes-burn, where they were commanded by Ambrosius, who, though he could not obtain the victory, seems at least to have left it in dispute. After the death of Hengist, Ælla, being reinforced by a body of his countrymen from Germany, undertook the siege of Andredcaſter, which proved a very tedious and hazardous enterprize. The Britons exerted all their courage and activity for the preservation of this important place, and harrassed the besiegers to such a degree, by throwing missiles at a distance, attacking them by surprize, and retreating suddenly to their woods, through which they could not be pursued, that the Saxon general found it impracticable to reduce the town, until he had divided his army into two bodies, one of which was employed to cover the besiegers: then he carried on his attacks with redoubled fury, and was so much exasperated at the obstinate defence made by the besieged, that, when at last he took the place by assault, he ordered the garrison and inhabitants to be put to the sword, and burned the town to ashes. Having thus extended his conquests to the frontiers of Kent, which was now peaceably occupied by Eſca, the son of Hengist, he assumed the title of King, after having resided fourteen years in the island, and reigned with great reputation \*.

An.Ch.490. The arrival of Cerdic and his son Cynewic.

From this period there is an interval of five years, during which we find no transaction of historical authenticity; but, this was succeeded by a

\* He died after a reign of thirty-two years, leaving his dominions to his son Cissa, who extended the limits of his sovereignty, and reduced an old Roman station, the Regnum in the

Itinerary of Antoninus, which being rebuilt and fortified, derived from the prince the name of Chicheſter. Hunting.

\* T  
don call  
Battle w

very remarkable event, namely, the arrival of a Saxon chief called Cerdic and his son Cynric, who, with a body of troops, embarked in five ships, arrived at a place since known by the name of Cerdicshore, which Camden supposes to be Cerdicland, near Yarmouth in Yorkshire; but Matthew of Westminster more judiciously places it on the western coast in the neighbourhood of Dorset and Hants; which with some of the adjoining counties formed the scene of his conquests. He was opposed on the very first day of his landing by the Britons, who attacked him with their usual impetuosity, but were repulsed towards night; and as they did not appear next day, he extended his quarters along the shore. They did not, however, lay aside their design of distressing this invader, but harrassed him in an unintermitting war of five and twenty years; in the course of which he must have abandoned the footing he had gained, unless he had been powerfully assisted by his countrymen already settled in Britain, and supplied with strong reinforcements from Germany. One of these was conducted by Porte, with his sons Bieda and Megla, who made their first descent at Portland or Portesham, near Abbotsbury in Dorsetshire, and sustained a vigorous attack from the natives, commanded by a young nobleman, who lost his life in the engagement.

Mean while Cerdic made such progress in his conquests, that he seems to have been considered as the successor of Hengist, in the influence and command he exerted over all the Saxons; and against him the whole military power of the Britons was directed. Ambrosius being dead, they were ruled by a prince whom the Saxon annals distinguish by the appellation of Natan \*, though whether

\* This British king is by Huntingdon called Nazaleod: who says, the battle was fought at Cherford upon the Avon, between Salisbury and Ringwood. Camden supposes this king to have been the celebrated Ambrosius,

An.Ch. 501: whether this was the son of the late king, or his supposed brother Uther Pendragon, we cannot now determine; so much is this part of history involved in monkish fable and romance. But, whosoever he might be, certain it is, he assembled the whole strength of the kingdom, while Cerdic, in order to oppose such united force, demanded and received succours from Esca king of Kent, Ella king of Suffex, Porte, who had settled in Hampshire, and all the Saxon colonies in Britain. Thus reinforced, he formed his army into two divisions, one of which he led in person, giving the command of the other to his son Cynric, and advanced against the Britons, in order to terminate the war by one decisive battle. The British monarch, far from declining the trial, attacked his division in person with such irresistible impetuosity, that the Saxons were broke and routed with great slaughter; when Cynric, perceiving the Britons pursuing without order, and fatigued with the action, charged them in flank with such vigour that they were obliged to face about in their own defence. The division of Cerdic rallying at the same time, the fortune of the day was reversed, and the Britons were defeated in their turn, with the loss of their gallant

The Britons  
receives a  
terrible over-  
throw at  
Cerdic's-  
ford.

whose name is never mentioned by the Saxon annalists, although he obtained so many victories over them. Archbishop Usher is of opinion, that this is the renowned Uther, whose true name was Nathan-leod, the other being no more than an epithet, signifying wonderful or terrible.

Mr. Carte adopts the sentiment of Camden, supposing that Ambrosius Aurelius was his Roman name, but that the Britons bestowed upon him the surname of Natan Leod, which signifies, the defence of the people; an epithet which they would naturally

give to such a great prince, who, as Huntingdon calls him, was Rex maximus Britannorum. He judges the place where the battle was fought to be Tanley, about four miles from Andover, and ten from Ambresbury; and the county of Natanleage to have run from thence to Charford, which is generally allowed to be Cerdic's ford. This is a very probable conjecture, and naturally accounts for the death and burial of Ambrosius, at a place, which, from that event, still retains the name of Ambresbury.

king,



king, who with five thousand men lay dead upon the field, thence called Cerdic's ford. But, the death of their king and compatriots, who fell upon this occasion, was not so prejudicial to the Britons, as the reputation and fame of the victory, which invited fresh shoals of Saxon adventurers to leave their native country and come to push their fortune in Britain.

An. Ch. 501.

An. Ch. 503.  
Chr. Sax.  
Ethelred,  
Flor.

It was at this period that the celebrated Arthur appeared with such dignity upon the stage, and revived the drooping spirits of his countrymen. This prince, of whom such miraculous exploits are recorded, is of such obscure original, that some authors suppose him to be the son of this Nathan Leod; others alledge his father was Uther Pendragon, brother of Ambrosius: but he is generally thought to be of Cornish extraction, and son of Gurlois king of that province: this is the opinion of the Welsh authors, who say he was born at Tindangel, and sovereign of that county alone; while other historians affirm, that his dominion extended over all the Britons. Both these allegations may be true, if we suppose his hereditary power was confined to Cornwall; and that he was elected to the supreme command, like his predecessors, who reigned over all the Britons without exception. If we embrace this conjecture, we cannot help giving credit to Malmesbury, who affirms that he had served as general under Ambrosius; and surely, the Britons could not pitch upon a more proper person for the sovereign sway, than a prince of Arthur's heroic genius, who had been trained to war in their armies, and in all probability was at hand to collect their scattered forces, and take immediate measures for repairing the damage they had sustained. In this station, he exerted himself with such bravery and conduct, that, according to Nennius and the most authentic historians, he

Arthur is  
vested with  
the chief  
command  
of the Bri-  
tons.

An. Ch. 508. worsted the Saxons in twelve successive battles; though these seem to have been inconsiderable skirmishes, in which the British prince acquired more glory than advantage; for the scene of the war was confined to Lincolnshire and part of Wales; and the Saxons, notwithstanding all those checks, prosecuted the war with such vigour and perseverance, that Arthur was fain at last to conclude a treaty, by which he yielded to Cerdic the counties of Hants and Somerset, which were afterwards erected into the kingdom of Wessex \*.

Nennius.

An Ch 514.  
Stufe and  
Withgar  
land in  
England.

The most remarkable of Arthur's exploits were achieved in the interval of five years, between the battle of Cerdic's-ford and the arrival of Stufe and Withgar, two nephews of Cerdic, who came with three ships, containing a reinforcement from Germany, and landed at Cerdic's ford without opposition. Though next morning the Britons appeared in order of battle, and an engagement ensued, in which the islanders were totally defeated. This, however, must have been some inconsiderable body, otherwise they would hardly have suffered themselves to be cut in pieces by such a number of Saxons as could be transported in three vessels. Yet this supply is said to have enabled Cerdic to retrieve his affairs, which had been greatly disordered by the bravery and fortune of Arthur; and now that Esca and Ælla, kings of Kent and Suffex, were dead, he assumed the title of king, and was considered as the head of the Saxon interest in Great Britain; though not before he had obtained another signal victory over the Britons at Chardford in Hampshire, where both sides fought with equal obstinacy till the close of day, when the Britons

\* The detail of this hero's supposed achievements in Geoffry of Monmouth, is an extravagant ill-conceived romance, more worthy of the invention of a Welsh bard, like Tasse, than the pen of an authentic historian.

betook themselves to flight, and the intervening darkness secured them from the pursuit of the enemy. But it does not appear that Arthur was personally present on this occasion.

An.Ch. 519.  
Chron. Sax.  
Flor. Wig.

Cerdic, elated with this success, advanced in the course of the succeeding year, to the borders of Hampshire, and invested the town of *Caer-Badon* in Berks, which, before the use of artillery, was counted very strong both by nature and art. Arthur, unwilling to lose a place of such importance, assembled his troops; and marching to its relief, attacked the Saxons with such fury, that they were obliged to quit the siege, and take refuge on the neighbouring hill of *Badon*, from whence they were next morning dislodged by the \* British hero with great slaughter. This complete victory humbled the Saxons to such a degree that they were fain to be quiet for some years; and, notwithstanding the weakness of the Britons, who had suffered grievously in the course of the war, those strangers in all probability must have abandoned their conquests, had they not been reinforced from time to time, by a continual influx of their countrymen, which enabled them to extend their possessions, and at last expel the native inhabitants.

Cerdic is  
defeated by  
Arthur at  
Badon-hill.

Cerdic, strengthened by these continual supplies, not only regarded the footing he had lost at *Badon-hill*, but having totally reduced all Hampshire and Dorsetshire, he landed with an army in the isle of *Wight*, which he likewise subdued, after having fought an obstinate battle at *Witgarabyrig*, or *Ceresbrook*, where the Britons received a terrible overthrow.

The isle of  
Wight is  
conquered by  
Cerdic.

This victory established him in the quiet possession of all his dominions, when reflecting that the Saxons lately arrived were neither his natural-

\* Huntingdon says, Arthur slew four hundred and forty Saxons, with his own hand, in the action of the preceding day.

born

An.Ch. 530. born subjects, nor connected with him by and who is re- legal bond of attachment, he thought proper to be crowned at re-crowned at Winchester, the capital of his new- erected kingdom, and exacted from his people a new oath of allegiance. He did not long survive this ceremony, but died in peace, with the reputation of a warlike prince, and a consummate politician, after having, with the consent of his son, bestowed the isle of Wight upon his two nephews Stufe and Withgar.

Arthur's domestic unhappiness. Chron. Sax.

Uss. Chron. in Brit.

Arthur killed at the battle of Camlan. An Ch. 542.

Arthur, in the decline of life, was prevented from interrupting the success of the Saxons, by domestic troubles that produced a civil war, in which he lost his life. His first wife had been carried off by Meluas king of Somersetshire, who detained her a whole year at Glassenbury, until Arthur, discovering the place of her retreat, advanced with an army against the ravisher, who, in all probability, would have paid dear for his presumption, had not peace been effected, and the lady restored; by the mediation of Gildas Albanus, who was Arthur's uncle by his mother. We do not hear that the British hero had any cause to complain of his second marriage; but his third consort was debauched by his own nephew Mordred, a Cumbrian prince, whom in all probability she accompanied to his own dominions in the north of England. By such an outrage he incurred the vengeance of the uncle, which, however, was for some time suspended by the arts and interest of his nephew, who found means to excite a rebellion. At last, the two princes met in the battle of Camlan in Lancashire, and attacked each other with such fury that Mordred fell upon the spot, after having aimed a blow at Arthur, which proved mortal\*. The body of this celebrated monarch

was,

\* Mordred had no territories in the west of England, consequently it is not at all probable that this battle should be fought at Canelford in Cornwall, unless we suppose that the nephew went in quest of his uncle, to such



was, at his dying request, transported to the old church of Glaffenbury, and interred by his second wife Guinever, between two pyramids, according to the description given by Malmesbury, and the songs which the Welsh bards composed in his praise †.

Thus fell the last of the British worthies, who had with indefatigable virtue so long supported the cause of his sinking country; and was certainly, exclusive of all fiction and romance, an illustrious hero, of undaunted courage, unshaken fortitude, unblemished morals, and unlimited generosity, which flowed among all his dependents. In consequence of his zeal for religion he was extremely liberal to the church, and an eminent patron and protector of the bards, in whose poems the memory

such a distance from his own dominions; for it appears from Vaughan's dissertation on the British chronology, that Mordred was the son of Lew, a Cumbrian prince; and his brother Gwalchmai, or Walwain, was sovereign of Galloway in Scotland; tho' he served his uncle Arthur with unshaken fidelity, and was buried at Ross in Pembrokeshire. Mr. Carte, for these reasons, concludes that the battle was fought near Kirky Laundale, not far from Lancaster; as this name answers exactly in sense to the British word Camlan, signifying the valley of Lan.

† Henry II. passing through Wales, and hearing those songs describing the burial-place of Arthur, was seized with an emotion of curiosity to know the truth, and in the year 1189 he granted a warrant to search for the body of Arthur. After having dug seven feet they found a broad grave-stone, in the lower or undermost surface of which was fixed a leaden cross,

inscribed, HIC JACET SEPULTVS INCLITVS REX ARTHURUS IN INSULA AVALLONIA. Some feet lower in the ground, they discovered a wooden coffin, containing the skeleton of a man of very large dimensions; and Giraldus Cambrensis, who was then present, says, he reckoned ten wounds upon the skull, all of which had been healed up, except one that remained still open, and was in all probability the immediate cause of his death. At the same time the tomb of his second wife Guinever was opened, when her golden tresses appeared intire and bright, and plaited in a very curious manner: but when touched sunk into dust. Both skeletons were removed into the new church, and there buried in a marble tomb, and the leaden cross with the inscription was kept in the treasury of Glaffenbury church, until it was suppressed in the reign of Henry VIII. Stow's Chronicle.

of

An.Ch. 542. of his achievements is perpetuated, and even his existence ascertained \*.

Britain involved in anarchy.

The fate of this excellent prince was the more deplorable, as no person survived that was capable to fill his station, or in any manner support the weight of government, at such a critical conjuncture, when the Saxon power daily gained ground in the heart of the kingdom, and threatened the whole British nation with the total loss of their country. At this period, they were oppressed by five cotemporary princes, whom Gildas describes as monsters of wickedness and impiety; so that they had nothing to expect but misery from their example and administration. Their names were Aurelius Conanus, in all probability the descendant of the famous Ambrosius, Vortiporius king of the Demitæ, Constantinus, Cuneglasius, and Magoclonus, who is mentioned as having been the greatest in power as well as in wickedness. These were not only profligate, but disunited: no one of them had power and interest sufficient to acquire the supreme authority over his competitors; and their contention involved the nation in civil troubles, which rendered it an easy prey to their Saxon conquerors. Those invaders had by this time dispossessed the natives of a great part of South Britain, and the Saxon settlements were daily extended by fresh colonies from Germany.

\* By the siege of Talieffin and Llowarchen, we are made acquainted with the scenes of his twelve great victories obtained over the Saxons. The first battle was fought at the mouth of the river Glen, in Northumberland. The second, third, fourth, and fifth on the Douglas, a river running by Wigan in Lancashire; the sixth near a brook called Bassas, supposed to be near Basingstoke, in Hampshire; the seventh, in Coit Kelydon, probably in the Cumbrian kingdom; the eighth, at Guinion, now Bencheſter, in the Bishopric of Durham; the ninth, was at Caerlegian, now Cheſter; the tenth, at Aderith, on the borders of Scotland; the eleventh, at the mountain of Agned-cath Regenion, which Lloyd supposes to be Arthur's ſeat by Edinburgh; and the twelfth, at mount Badon, in Berks. Carte's Hiſt. of England.

The

The kingdom of the East Saxons was already erected by Erchinwin, the son of Offa, under whom they gradually became masters of Essex, Middlesex, and part of Hertfordshire: the kingdom of Kent was under the dominion of Emaric, the grandson of Esca, who had ended his days in peace and reputation. Mercia, founded by Crida, descended from Withelig the second son of Woden, comprehended the country from the Severn eastward to Lancashire and Yorkshire, without encroaching upon Norfolk, Suffolk, and Cambridgeshire, which composed the kingdom of the East Angles. As for those who settled in Northumberland, under Otta and Ebusa, they were exposed to more opposition than any other colony of their countrymen had experienced in this island; for over and above the efforts of the Britons to dispossess them, they were continually harassed by the Scots; and therefore gladly received a new swarm of their brethren, commanded by Ida, who landed at Flamborough in Yorkshire, and was unanimously elected sovereign of the Northumbrian kingdom. Mean while Cerdic dying was succeeded by his son Cynric or Kenric, who, though a prince of an enterprising genius, continued quiet, within the limits of his inheritance, till the death of Arthur, when he undertook the conquest of Wiltshire, which he reduced, after having defeated the Britons at Old Sarum, and taken the strong fortress of Scarbyrig, hard by the field of battle.

An.Ch. 542.

Progress of  
the Saxon  
invaders.Hen. Hunt.  
Ethelward.  
Chron. Sax.

The Britons being now driven to despair, collected their whole force in order to revenge, at one blow, all the calamities they had suffered from this Saxon prince and his father; and advancing as far as Banbury castle near Marlborough, divided their army into nine bodies, of which they formed three regular lines, having the horse and archers upon the wings, in the manner of the Romans. In this order

A drawn  
battle at  
Banbury  
castle be-  
tween the  
Britons and  
Saxons.

An.Ch. 556. order they were attacked by Kenric and his son Ceaulin, at the head of their Saxons armed with swords and maces, who, notwithstanding all their boasted valour, and the advantage they had in point of weapons over the arrows and javelins of the Britons, could not terminate the battle, until night parted the combatants. After this engagement, Kenric marched towards the edge of Berkshire, which he must have conquered had not death interposed, after a reign in which he had rather studied the arts of peaceful government, than prosecuted the operations of war, though he had acquired such reputation in arms while his father lived.

An.Ch. 560.

Some account of Ida, king of Northumberland.

This period is likewise distinguished by the death of Ida, king of Northumberland, who had reigned with equal dignity and success; and divided his dominions between his two sons Ælla and Adda, the first of whom inhabited that part of his kingdom called Deira, while Adda ruled in the division of Bernicia. But, as Ceaulin, the son of Kenric, king of Wessex, was by this time acknowledged as the supreme head of the Saxon confederacy, we shall henceforward pay our chief attention to the concerns of that warlike prince. His great power and reputation not only entailed upon him the aversion of the Britons, but even inspired his own countrymen with envy and ambitious emulation.

Ethelbert routed by Ceaulin at Wimbles-ton.

Ethelbert, king of Kent, a young prince of towering pride and some capacity, presuming upon his own power and talents, and resenting the loss of that preheminance among the Saxons which his progenitors had maintained, resolved to invade the dominions of Ceaulin, who advanced with his brother Cutha, to chastise his arrogance; and the two armies meeting at Wimbles-ton in Surry, Ethelbert was defeated with great slaughter.

After



After this encounter, Ceaulin's forces, under the command of his brother Cutha or Cutholf, advancing as far as Bedford, fought the battle which decided the fate of Mercia; for the Britons being defeated, had no alternative but that of submitting quietly or abandoning their country. Cutha's victory being followed by the reduction of Leighton, Aylesbury, Bensington, and Eignesham, which were towns of importance, Ceaulin soon made himself master of the vale of Bucks, and all Oxfordshire. Then he undertook the conquest of Gloucestershire, and fought a very bloody battle with the Britons at Derham, near Marsfield, where they were defeated, and three of their princes slain; and the cities of Bath, Cirencester and Gloucester, submitted to the conqueror. Nevertheless, some parts of the country held out seven years after the action, till the battle of Fethan-leagh, supposed to be Fretherne, on the eastern bank of the Severn, but more probably Featherstone-haugh, in the north of England, where the Britons at first gained a considerable advantage: but, Ceaulin rallying his forces, returned to the charge with redoubled fury, and obtained a complete victory, which however he dearly bought with the life of his son Cuthwin, a young prince of great expectation.

An.Ch 560.

The Britons  
defeated at  
Bedford,and after-  
wards at Fe-  
than-leagh.Chron. Sax.  
Ethelward.  
Huntingd.

An.Ch. 584.

The Britons were, upon this occasion, commanded by Malgo or Magoclunus, whom they had solemnly elected for their sovereign; and he was reinforced by a strong body of Scots, under the conduct of Griffin, sent thither as auxiliaries by his father king Aidan, with whom the British monarch had concluded a treaty of alliance; while Ceaulin's army was reinforced by Ethelfred, king of Northumberland, and Brudeus, monarch of the Picts. This action must have been fought with great fury on both sides; for, exclusive of Cuthwin's

win's

\* An. Ch. 584. win's death, the prince of Scotland and his cousin Burden, lord of the island Mona, were left dead upon the field, Ethelfred lost an eye, and the Pictish king was dangerously wounded.

Fordun.  
Buchan. l.v.

They retire  
to Wales.

This defeat, and the arrival of Cerdic, who formed the Mercian kingdom about this period, obliged the Britons to retire beyond the Severne, in order to wait for another opportunity to attack the Saxons with some prospect of success; and such an occasion very soon occurred. The ferocious disposition of Ceaulin rendered him as odious to his own subjects, as he was detested by Ethelbert king of Kent, who had not laid aside the hope of retrieving the former importance of his family. He therefore fomented the discontent of Ceaulin's subjects, until it broke out in an open rebellion, headed by his own nephew Ceolric, son of the brave Cutholf, lately deceased, and even engaged the Britons and Scots in his confederacy, by flattering them with the hope of revenging themselves upon the tyrant. They joined forces therefore, and advancing to Wodnesburg, or Wantborough in Wilts, gave battle to Ceaulin, who being defeated, fled from his dominions, and died in exile, while his kingdom devolved to Ceola, and Ethelbert was declared chief of the Saxon confederacy.

An. Ch. 592.  
Ethelbert's  
great power.

This prince, who had very early in life displayed his ambition, was by this time distinguished for his great capacity, and soon rendered himself formidable by his power to the other Saxon potentates. He married Bertha, daughter of Cherebert king of Paris; an alliance, which while it gratified his pride, added lustre and importance to his character at home; so that he was enabled to exercise a kind of tyrannical dominion over the Saxons, who were settled to the southward of the Humber. On the death of Crida king of Mercia, he seized that kingdom as lord-paramount, tho' Widda,

the

the son of the late king, still survived; but finding this act of violence had produced murmurs and discontents among the other Saxon princes, he thought proper to restore it, after it had continued three years in his possession, though he still reserved a sort of superiority over Widda's administration.

An.Ch. 592.



## OF THE CHURCH.

BEfore we proceed with the history of that period which begins with the conversion of the British Saxons to Christianity, the reader will expect that some account should be given of the disputes and troubles in which the christian church was involved, from the departure of the Romans to the establishment of the Saxon heptarchy; we shall therefore in this place, insert a brief abstract of those transactions.

Seminaries  
erected in  
Britain.

We are informed by the venerable Bede, that St. Germanus and Lupus, who had re-established the true faith at Verolam by their teaching, preaching, and working of miracles, were no sooner departed from the island, than Pelagianism began to revive, and regained with such rapidity the ground it had lost, that another application was made to St. Germanus, who, in conjunction with Severus bishop of Triers, returned to Britain, and performed such a miraculous cure upon the lame son of a nobleman called Elathius, that the people were convinced of their being the chosen missionaries of God, and the chief professors of Pelagianism were banished from their country. Then the holy Germanus instituted schools of learning, under the inspection of persons eminent for their abilities. Dubricius taught in one of these seminaries at Landaff; another was superintended by one Daniel; and Illutus kept a

Numb. IV. L great

great school at Lantuit in Glamorganshire, where a great number of the British nobility received their education. As for Dubricius, he was first created bishop of Landaff, and afterwards consecrated archbishop of Caer-leon or Chester, from whence he transferred the metropolitan see to Landaff. He erected twelve monasteries, and taught his monks to earn their subsistence with the labour of their hands. He is said to have been consecrated by Germanus and Lupus. Aurelius Ambrosius confirmed his election: on that prince's death, he invested Uther and afterwards Arthur with the ensigns of royalty; and lastly retired to an hermitage, where he ended his days, after having resigned the pomp of the archbishopric.

Spelman's  
abstract of  
the hist. of  
Dubricius.

Three arch-  
bishoprics in  
South-Bri-  
tain.

From the first establishment of Christianity in this island, there were three archbishoprics, namely, of York, London, and Caer-leon, to whom eight and twenty bishops or flamens were subject. He of London presided over all Cornwall, and the country northward to the Humber. Northumberland and Albany were under the jurisdiction of the archbishop of York, and the see of Caer-leon extended over the whole principality of Wales.

Heydon.  
Polichron.

Dubricius had one place of study on the river Wey, and another at Moshrofs, and is said to have instructed a thousand disciples, among whom were St. Thelias, Samson, Idanus, and other distinguished characters. Nor was Iltutus less eminent for the number and quality of his pupils, among whom we number Samson, archbishopric of Dole in Brittany; Paul bishop of the Oxismii, a see comprehending the dioceses of Treguier, St. Pol and St. Brieu; and at this period, Britain flourished in civil and ecclesiastical learning.

The monastery of Banchor or Bangor was another seminary that gave many valuable men to the church, and was so populous, as we are informed by



by Bede, that when the monks were separated into seven divisions, each contained three hundred brothers, that maintained themselves by the labour of their hands : one hundred of these were appointed to perform divine service at one time ; and were succeeded by an equal number in rotation ; so that it continued the whole day without intermission.

Bede.

The British church owed the first form of its liturgy to Germanus and Lupus, who introduced the worship of the Gallican church ; and this was at that time very different from the ritual of the church of Rome.

Account of  
the British  
councils or  
synods.

The first Welsh council of the clergy was assembled in order to take cognizance of Vortigern's profligacy, after that prince had been doomed to destruction by the prophecies of Merlin ; and they seemed to have raised Aurelius Ambrosius to the throne by their sole power and influence.

An.Ch.465.

The next occasion for which the British synod assembled, was the consecration of St. Dubricius and Thelias, the first of whom was elected archbishop of Caer-leon, and the other bishop of Landaff, though not without the consent of the sovereign.

An.Ch.516.

The third general council was convoked to recognize the right of Arthur, to whom they swore allegiance ; and he in return confirmed their rights, privileges, and possessions. Immediately after this assembly Dubricius is said to have retired from the world, and to have been succeeded by Arthur's uncle St. David, who was educated by Paulinus, a disciple of Germanus, and consecrated, together with Elaus and Thelias, by the patriarch of Jerusalem, to which place there was at that period a great resort of British devotees.

The fourth synod was held at a place called Slandewy, in the church of St. David at Brevy, and

Pelagianism  
extirpated  
by St. David;

Usher's An-  
tig. of Brit.  
church.

An. Ch. 560.

Mauricus;  
king of Gla-  
morgan-  
shire, ex-  
communi-  
cated.

Spelman's  
Chron.

and assembled in order to concert measures for suppressing the Pelagian heresy, which had revived and made a considerable progress. Here such a number of bishops assisted, as might seem incredible, if we did not know that in those days there were itinerant bishops, who had no settled dioceses. St. David held forth at this council with such force of eloquence, as in a great measure extinguished the flame of Pelagianism, and was created metropolitan over all the churches in the western parts of Britain.

There was another synod at Landaff, convoked by Oudoceus, the successor of Thelias, upon a very remarkable occasion. Mauricus, king of Glamorganshire, and Cynetu, another petty sovereign, met at Landaff, and swore a mutual peace upon the relics of their saints: in the sequel, Mauricus, notwithstanding his oath, slew Cynetu in a treacherous manner; when the clergy looking upon themselves as guarantees of the peace, proceeded to ecclesiastical censures; and Oudoceus, in full convocation, excommunicated Mauricus for the murder, and violation of his oath, concluding the sentence with an anathema, imprecating that his days might be few; his children orphans; and his wife, a widow. The king, in consequence of this excommunication, finding himself abandoned by his subjects, humbled himself before the bishop, who absolved him of the curse, on his profession of penitence, and promise to fast, pray, and give alms: yet the interdiction was not removed, until he had given undoubted proofs of his sincerity, in four manors granted to the church of Landaff, for the redemption of his own soul and that of Cynetu, whom he had murdered: a circumstance that entails the suspicion of selfishness upon the memory of the good bishop.

Among

\* Among all the instances of ecclesiastic authority exercised over the British princes in those days, we find no example of a king's being dethroned, and his place supplied with another, by the apostolical power of the clergy; on the contrary, the following incident plainly proves that they did not conceive themselves to be vested with any such prerogative. Morcant, and Frioc his uncle, two petty princes of Wales, had, according to the fashion of the times, solemnly sworn in presence of St. Oudoceus and his clergy, that if ever the one should murder or betray the other, the offender should not have it in his power to commute his crime for gold or silver, but resign the government of his kingdom, and end his days in pilgrimage. This oath was soon violated by Morcant, who murdered his uncle; and then desired he might buy off the penalty from the church of Landaff. The case was debated in full synod at Landaff; and he was absolved on promise of fasting, praying, and giving alms; that the government might not suffer by his absence, as they had no power to create a new king. This decree not only implies the limited power of the clergy, but is a sure mark of the independency of the British church, which thus proceeded to exert the last stroke of sacerdotal authority without the sanction of Rome, or any pretended superiority of ecclesiastic jurisdiction, to which no delinquent ever dreamed of appealing from the censure of our own prelates.

Morcant absolved of perjury and murder.

The princes of those days must have been extremely barbarous and brutal: for we find there was another synod held at the same place, by the same prelate, upon a similar subject. A certain prince, called Guidnorth, slew his own brother;

\* This and the following transactions are extracted from an old manuscript history of the church of

Landaff, which contains also a curious detail of the ceremony of the oath and the absolution.

Guidnorth  
sent to do  
penance in  
Bretagne, for  
having kill-  
ed his own  
brother.

and, being excommunicated by the clergy, suffered under the sentence three whole years, at the expiration of which he had recourse to Oudoceus, who sent him in pilgrimage to Samson archbishop of Dole, in Bretagne, where he thought the prince might comfortably accomplish his penance, as an intimacy subsisted between Samson and Thelias of Landaff; and as Guidnorth would be perfectly at his ease among people who spoke his own language, and owned themselves of British extraction. This royal penitent, however, thought the term prescribed for his penance was too tedious, and returned to Britain before it was expired, in hope of prevailing upon Oudoceus to allow of commutation; and although that good prelate died before he could obtain his consent, he purchased absolution of his successor Berthguin for a valuable consideration. Besides these councils held by Oudoceus, St. David assembled a synod at a place called Vittory, in which the acts of the council of Brevy were confirmed, and new regulations made for the better government of the church.

Girald.  
Camb.

Animosity  
between the  
English  
Christians  
and the  
Saxon con-  
verts.

The christian religion, if we may believe Gildas, never suffered more persecution than it underwent in Britain, from the barbarity of the Saxon pagans, who burned all the cities and churches to the ground from sea to sea, and stained the altars with the blood of the clergy, after having massacred all those whom they found in the exercise of the christian religion. We must, however, read with caution the writings of a British author, who seems to have been rancorously prejudiced against the enemies of his country. It has been a constant remark in all ages, that no quarrel rages to such a pitch of cruelty and outrage, as that which is inflamed with an ingredient of religion. The Saxons were considered, not barely as enemies and invaders of the Britons, but as impious pagans and idolaters, who came to  
destroy



destroy the faith, and seize the lands of the clergy. These were such aggravations of hostile intent, that even when the Britons found themselves altogether unable to cope with the intruders, the priests would not allow them to submit, but wound them up to an enthusiastic fury, which prompted them to rush upon the swords of their enemies; and all that perished by their own madness were accounted martyrs to their religion.

We do not find that those who submitted and lived among the conquerors, were molested on the score of religion: on the contrary, it appears from St. Gregory's letter to Theodoret and Theobald, kings of the Franks, that the Saxons influenced (without doubt) by the example of those peaceable Britons, discovered a desire to become christians; but that the church of the Britons, from motives of hatred and aversion, refused to encourage them in those laudable sentiments, or to instruct them in the principles and doctrines of the true faith: nay, it was this pious disposition which induced that pope to send over Augustin to complete the work of their conversion. Before his elevation to the pontificate, he chanced one day to pass through the slave-market, where observing some young men, of engaging aspects, standing ready to be sold to the best bidder, he inquired about their country, and finding they were English pagans, was seized with an emotion of pity, which did not arise from the circumstances of their slavery, but from the thralldom of their souls, which were under the dominion of the devil. The good man was so much melted by this consideration, that he resolved to deliver the whole nation from the tyranny of Satan, and with that view he actually embarked in a ship for Britain, when his pious intention was frustrated by his popularity in Rome; for his design was no sooner made public, than the citizens presented a

Gregory undertakes the conversion of the English.

remonstrance to pope Benedict, requesting that Gregory might not be suffered to absent himself from his evangelical functions in that city ; and he was recalled accordingly.

Sends Augustin into Britain.

He did not however lay aside his apostolical design ; for, when he succeeded Pelagius in the papal chair, he ordered a monk called Augustin, and others of the same brotherhood, to undertake the office of missionaries in Britain. They obeyed his holiness, though they had no great stomach to the enterprize ; but their terrors waxed so strong, before they had performed one half of the journey, that they sent back Augustin with a petition to the pope, begging they might be excused from a mission that must necessarily expose their lives to the most imminent danger from the prejudice and barbarity of such a ferocious nation. Nevertheless, Gregory would not be diverted from his purpose, by the importunities of those poor terrified monks, to whom he dispatched Augustin with a letter to this effect :

“ Gregory, servant of the servants of God, to the servants of our Lord.

“ Dearly beloved children,

“ Because it had been better not to begin at all, than to recede even in thought from those things that are already begun, you must fulfil the good work which, with God’s assistance, you have undertaken : let not, therefore, your hearts be appalled by the fatigue of the journey, or the tongues of malicious men, but proceed under the guidance and direction of God, with all diligence and fervour to accomplish the great work you have so happily commenced, in full confidence that in proportion to the greatness of the labour, the glory of your eternal reward will be augmented. Humbly obey in all things your returning director Augustin, whom we have

“ con-

## OF THE CHURCH.

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“ constituted your abbot, well knowing that what-  
 “ ever shall be done by his advice, will turn out  
 “ to the advantage of your souls in all things.  
 “ May God Almighty protect you with his grace,  
 “ and grant that I may see the fruit of your labour  
 “ in that country where our eternal habitation is  
 “ fixed : though I cannot be your fellow-labourer,  
 “ let me rejoice in your reward, as one that wishes  
 “ to share your toils. Finally, may God protect  
 “ you from all danger, my dearest children.”

Bed. 1. 4;

At the same time, he recommended them strongly to Æthercus, archbishop of Arles, desiring that he would assist them with all manner of accommodations in their journey ; and he sent letters of the same purport to the king and queen of the Franks, by whom they were supplied with interpreters, who greatly facilitated the success of the mission \*.

\* Britain, even in this age, produced a number of men eminent for piety and learning ; the most remarkable of whom were Dubricius ; St. David, the two Samsons, both archbishops of York, and both translated from thence to the archbishopric of Dole in Brittany ; the second is said to have been of royal birth, and to have carried abroad with him many records relating to his see, which never could be recovered. Cadacus, abbot of Lancarvon, was the son of a petty prince, and inherited a large family estate, which he expended in acts of hospitality and munificence, maintaining three hundred poor people, chiefly clergymen, and keeping an open table for all comers. Paternus, descended of a noble family of the Armorican Britons, that he might indulge a turn for religious solitude, concealed himself for some time in Ireland, from whence he came over to Wales, where he acquired vast reputation for humanity and wisdom, by which he compromised many disputes, and reconciled the

most inveterate enemies. While he resided in Cardiganshire, he effected by his mediation the celebrated peace among the British princes, after Arthur's death, lived in great friendship with St. David and Thelias, and lastly retired to his own country, where he died. Camden tells us, there is still a church standing in Cardiganshire, dedicated to his memory, under the name of Lhan-Badern-Vaur. St. Thelias was pupil to St. David, and preferred to the see of Landaff ; in which he acquired great reputation, which was equalled by that of his successor, St. Oudoceus. St. Petroc was a zealous promoter of the christian religion in Ireland, where he lived twenty years, though he was originally of Petrocstow or Padstow, in Cornwall : upon his return to Britain he lived in a monastery near the Severn, where he instructed pupils of the first quality. As for St. David, he is said to have died in the hundred and forty-sixth year of his age, leaving behind him an unequalled character

rafter for elegance and an exemplary life.

Among these worthies we may place St. Kentigern, otherwise called St. Mongo, who was abbot of Glasgow, in Scotland; but lived many years in North Wales, where he founded a religious society, and acquired great reputation for learning and piety; then he returned to his own country, where he died in the year 560.

St. Afaph, a Welchman of noble

extraction, was pupil to Kentigern, who made him his successor, both in his monastery and bishopric.

St. Columba was an Irishman, whose evangelic labours were chiefly confined to North Britain.

Gildas studied under Iltutus, and was a monk at Glassenbury: he resided also in Brittany, where he wrote his history, and died about the year 570.

Usher's Antiq.

Account



Account of the civil and religious government  
amongst the SAXONS.

**I**N order to make the reader acquainted with the genius of the Saxons who settled in England, and whose history begins at it were at this period, it will be necessary to give a succinct account of their civil and religious government, as well as of the particular customs by which their character is distinguished and ascertained.

Their government was aristocratical; for, tho' the people were consulted in all affairs of very great consequence, or fundamental points of constitution, and their sentiments expressed in a very tumultuary manner, the authority resided in a few noblemen, who were no other than chieftains of distinct tribes, united for their mutual advantage. Of these a certain number was chosen, to superintend the administration of justice; and in time of war one of that number was elected general or king, but his power expired at the return of peace. We are not to look for a settled constitution among the Saxons, who first landed in Britain. They were bold illiterate adventurers, who enlisted as volunteers with commanders of approved valour, under whose conduct they hoped to gain an agreeable settlement, or reap a plentiful harvest of plunder. Though they retained the manners and customs of their own country, it is not to be supposed they would adhere to the established forms of government in a military expedition, during which they were obliged to contrive new regulations according to the emergency of their affairs, the character of their leaders, and the inconstancy or caprice of their own disposition. When they acquired settlements in Britain, they  
formed

formed new societies, and would have naturally adopted the constitution of their own country, had not divers circumstances concurred to shew them the expediency of altering the system of government. Their leaders had gained an accession of power, in the course of their military command; and the soldiers, inured to rapine and irregularities, could not be restrained within proper bounds, by any civil institution weaker than that of regal authority. Nor without such a power to unite, controul, and command the petty chiefs as well as the commons, could the necessary measures have been taken for the preservation of their colonies in a strange country surrounded by implacable foes, who exerted their utmost vigilance, courage, and activity for their destruction. These considerations, reinforced by the motives of private interest and ambition, induced the communities of the Saxon adventurers in England, to invest particular persons with the kingly prerogative, under such restrictions, however, as formed a mutual compact, rendering the ties of allegiance and protection equally binding and reciprocal.

The Saxons invest a particular person with the sovereign power.

Their original aristocracy.

Before this establishment of sovereign authority, the Saxons assembled upon certain days to deliberate upon public affairs; and they generally met in arms. The assembly being convened, silence was commanded by a priest, who seems to have had great authority on such occasions: then, some person eminent for military virtue, quality or eloquence, stood up and harangued the multitude on the subject of their meeting; and his speech was either condemned by a tumultuous noise, or applauded by the clattering of their javelins. The common business of these councils was to appoint chiefs for presiding in their several divisions, shires, streets, and villages; and each of these presidents

was assisted by an hundred commoners by way of assessors \*.

Though those consultations were held by the chiefs and people in common, every individual was not admitted to the council, which consisted of such only as wore armour, and no man was entitled to this privilege until he had, by the consent and determination of the council, been formally armed by some relation or godfather with a shield and lance; so that this ceremony seems to have been the original of knighthood.

Custom that gave rise to knighthood.

Tacit. de Mor. Germ.

The Saxon husband, instead of receiving a portion, settled a dower upon his wife at marriage; and if she proved false to his bed, he was permitted by law to cut off her hair, strip her naked, turn her out of doors, in presence of her relations, and scourge her through the public streets.

The children succeeded to the inheritance of their fathers, without will: but after their settlement in Britain, they found it convenient to alter this institution; as all the property accruing from conquest was personal acquisition, and therefore alienable. Hence their bocland or free tenure, grantable by deed, was deemed alienable by will; whereas all the sons inherited alike the lands held by feofage.

They deemed it necessary to maintain the animosities and feuds as well as the friendships of their fathers: the crime of murder was punished by a fine of cattle, to be distributed among the family of the deceased; and the proprietor of the land prescribed to the farmer the quantity of corn, cattle, or cloth which he was to pay as rent; a custom still observed in North Britain, where the peasants pay in kind.

Their family-feuds and punctilios.

\* Hence we derive our hundred presided as judge, and all the best courts in England; in which the men of the county were his assessors and jurors. Brady's Hist. of Eng.

The Saxons were divided into three classes, namely, the noblemen, freemen, and slaves; and one order was restricted from contracting alliances of marriage with another. The nobles seem to have been very punctilious in preserving the purity of their blood; a custom which was supported by a law in England passed even after the date of the Magna charta; for the lord forfeited his wardship when convicted of having disposed of his ward in marriage, to his disparagement; that is, to a woman of inferior rank.

Their divination.

With respect to religion, we find they had superstitions in common with other nations. Their divination was very simple, with slips of wood cut from a fruit-bearing tree, and distinguished by different marks or notches; these they mingled and jumbled together in a white cloth; then the priest, if it was a public ceremony, or the father of the family, if it was a private augury, implored the assistance of the gods; and raising up his eyes towards heaven, took up a slip three times successively, and prognosticated good or evil, according to the marks that chanced to cast up. They likewise divined future events, by the singing and flight of birds, as well as from the neighing of horses, which they considered as the ministers of the gods, and especially those of a white colour; and these were fed in woods and groves at the publick expence. But, the circumstance from which they drew their surest presages touching the event of a war, was the issue of a single combat fought between one of their own champions and a captive of the nation against which they had commenced hostilities.

Tacit. de Mor. Germ.

Particulars of their superstition.

Their religion bore a strong affinity to that of other nations, with respect to the attributes of their deities. Woden was worshipped as their Mercury, with human sacrifices, and to him was consecrated the fourth day of the week. They seem to have

paid



paid their devotions to Venus under the denomination of Frea, who presided over the sixth day; and Tuesday derived its name from Tuisco, whom they cultivated as the founder of their nation. They likewise worshipped a goddess, whom they termed Eoster, and to her they dedicated the month of April, during which the wind commonly blows from the East, consequently favourable to them when they set out on their marine expeditions. But their principal patroness was Hartha or Earth, whose residence was in a vehicle covered with a sacred vestment, and placed in a consecrated grove, in a certain island of the ocean. This ark was sometimes carried about by cows, and attended by a priest, who alone was permitted to touch the vehicle. While this goddess continued in her progress and visitation, joy and festivity filled every place she honoured with her presence; and at her return to the temple or grove, the vehicle and the vestments were purified in a secret lake\*.

With regard to the customs and disposition of the Saxons, they were extremely hospitable, addicted to excessive drinking, and quarrelsome in their cups; they were a blunt, honest people, without guile or much ingenuity, who loved to carouse all night long at their malt liquor; upon which occasions they delivered their sentiments with such indelicate freedom, that the company seldom parted without bloodshed; yet they were as open to reconciliation as prone to anger. They were so infatuated in their attachment to games of chance, that a man, after having lost all his effects, very

Their peculiarities and disposition.

\* Besides these, the Saxons worshipped the sun and moon, represented by different idols. The god Thor was their principal deity that presided over the thunder. Seater or Crodo, who gave his name to

Saturday, was another of their gods. They likewise adored the idols Ermanfowl and Flint, which last was represented under the figure of a skeleton. Vide Verstegan, p. 53. and Adam Bremensis.

often played away his liberty, and allowed himself to be sold for a slave. They were grossly ignorant of arts and sciences, had little taste for agriculture; their funerals were conducted with great simplicity, and their mourning soon laid aside.

Their capital punishments were hanging and drowning; and lesser offences were atoned by paying certain mulcts in horses or cattle, part of which was given to the plaintiff, and the rest appropriated by the judge. As for the trials by fire and water, they were not yet practised by the Germans. They were habited in loose cassocks, armed with shields, spears, and daggers, or short swords; they were Herculean in make, robust in constitution, intrepid in danger, active in emergency, inured to fatigue, accustomed to rapine, savage of heart, and particularly cruel to their prisoners, whom they barbarously decimated, putting every tenth captive to death by the most excruciating tortures.

Tacit. de  
Mor. Germ.  
Sydon, l. viii.  
Symmach.  
l. ii.

## A general plan and division of the SAXON HEPTARCHY.

### The kingdom of KENT.

WE have already seen that Augustin and some fellow-labourers were dismissed by Gregory bishop of Rome, in order to convert those ignorant and boisterous Saxons, who had been so much occupied in tumults of war and necessary regulations touching their civil government, that hitherto they had found no time nor opportunity to consider the difference of religions, much less to be influenced, dazzled, and convinced by the truth and purity of the christian doctrine; for the number of individuals, who had already embraced the faith, was but inconsiderable when compared to the bulk of the nation. As this was certainly the case, Augustin would in all probability have found his mission very troublesome and hazardous, if he had not met with a powerful patroness in Bertha, consort of Ethelbert king of Kent, who had already made an impression on the mind of her husband, by her virtuous conduct, benevolence, and discretion, manifested in a course of thirty years which they lived together. By the articles of her marriage, she enjoyed the free exercise of her religion, and was attended by a venerable prelate called Luidhard, who officiated in a church dedicated to St. Martin, which had been built by the Romans near the walls of Canterbury. The exemplary conduct and powerful preaching of this primitive bishop, co-operated with the queen's learning and zeal, in giving a favourable idea of the christian religion.

The Kentish king Ethelbert prepared for receiving the doctrines of Christianity by his queen Bertha.

An.Ch. 597. religion to Ethelbert himself, as well as his courtiers, who by this time had even discovered a desire of being converted; so that the vineyard was well prepared when Augustin landed in the isle of Thanet with forty labourers, including a great many French clergymen, well versed in the English tongue, with whom he was supplied by Brunehaut regent of Austrasia and Burgundy, a prince remarkable for his good sense and piety.

Augustin  
lands on the  
isle of Thanet,  
and the king  
embraces the  
christian faith.

Upon his first landing he sent one of his interpreters to the Kentish king, declaring he was come from Rome with offers of eternal salvation; and in the mean time he and his followers lay in the open air, that they might not, by entering a Saxon house, subject themselves to the power of heathen necromancy. The king immediately ordered them to be furnished with all necessaries, and even visited them in the isle of Thanet, though he did not declare himself a convert until after they had fixed their residence in Canterbury, where, by their sermons in St. Martin's chapel, the austerity and innocence of their manners, and certain miracles, which had an effect upon the vulgar, they had gained a great number of proselytes, and preposessed the whole kingdom in their favour. Then the king openly espoused the christian religion; and Augustin, who had received episcopal ordination from the primate of Arles, erected Christchurch into a cathedral. The heathen temples, being purified and hallowed, were converted into places of worship, and the churches which had decayed were repaired; a seminary for learning was opened, the abbey of St. Augustin founded; and this apostle being now in possession of the see of Canterbury, endeavoured to extend his authority, and constitute himself metropolitan over a number of suffragans. With this view he had recourse to Gregory, who invested him with power over all the



the British bishops, and in the sequel indulged him with a grant of jurisdiction over all the Saxon prelates to be ordained, as Christianity should gain ground in England\*. Mean while the missionaries, having spread themselves over all the country, reaped a plentiful harvest of conversion, which was not a little ripened by the example of the king, who after having been fully instructed in all the duties and mysteries of his new religion, thought it high time to bestow some attention upon the temporal concerns of his people.

An.Ch.597.

Greg.  
Turon. l. ix.  
Bed. E. H.  
l. i.

In these sentiments he, by the advice of the wisest men in his dominions, ordered a body of laws to be digested and engrossed in the English language, that no person might plead ignorance in excuse of transgression. After this transaction we hear nothing of this prince, but that he reigned one and twenty years after his conversion, during which his pious queen Bertha dying, he espoused a French princess, who did not walk in the footsteps of her predecessor.

Compiles a  
body of laws.

Ethelbert, ending his days in peace, was succeeded by his son Eadbald, a profligate prince, who not only relapsed into Paganism, but also rioted in all manner of debauchery, not even scrupling to take his mother-in-law to his bed. But, he was afterwards reformed by the admonitions of Laurentius successor to Augustin in the see of Canterbury; put away his incestuous wife, and not only employed the rest of his life in acts of penitence and devotion, but contributed in a great measure to the conversion of Edwin, king of the Northumbrians; who married his sister Ethelburga, after Eadbald had stipulated that she and all her retinue

An.Ch.616.

An.Ch.639.

\* Together with this grant he received a pall, to be used only for divine service. It was a rich and magnificent robe of state, part of the imperial habit, allowed to the bishops of Rome by the favour of Constantine, Maria de concord. Sacerdot.

An. Ch. 639. should enjoy the free exercise of the christian religion. At the same time he prevailed upon Paulinus, a learned bishop, to accompany the princess to the court of her husband; and it was owing to the zeal and abilities of this reverend prelate, seconding the remonstrances of his queen, that Edwin afterwards embraced the true faith. Eadbald, notwithstanding his penitence, devotion, and donations to the church, seems to have been a weak prince; for, even the monkish historians allow, that he never could rival the greatness of his father.

Bede, l. ii.

Leaves his crown to his second son Ercombert.

His life, however, after his reformation, was irreproachable, and he reigned two and twenty years in tranquillity, leaving two sons, namely Ermenfred and Ercombert, the latter of whom succeeded him on the throne to the prejudice of his elder brother, who submitted to this disposition of the father on Ercombert's faithfully promising that the sons of Ermenfred should enjoy the kingdom after his death. This restitution, however, was never made, although Ercombert was a zealous christian, who ordered the heathen temples to be razed to the ground, and the idols to be hewn in pieces. He lived but four years after his accession to the throne, and left two sons called Egbert and Lotharius.

G. Thorn.

Egbert causes his two nephews to be murdered.

The first of these, instead of acting as guardian to his nephews, who were the true heirs of the crown, resolved to deprive them of their lives, as he had already robbed them of their inheritance, and found one of his nobles base enough to undertake such a detestable enterprize; the name of this wretch was Thunner, who, having murdered the innocents, threw their bodies into a river, where they were found floating, by the country people, and interred in the abbey of Ramsay. Egbert, dreading the consequence of this discovery, as well as the interest of Dorneva, sister to the murdered

princes, who by their death inherited their title, An.Ch.673. affected the utmost candour and remorse; and she relinquished her claim in consideration of some lands in the isle of Thanet, where she founded a monastery.

After this expiation of his guilt, his reign was mild and peaceable, during nine years, at the expiration of which he died, leaving two sons called Edrick and Widred, who did not immediately succeed their father, in imitation of whom their uncle and guardian Lotharius seized the sovereignty.

This usurper, having maintained his sway ten years without interruption, wanted to secure the crown of Kent to his posterity, by associating his son Richard upon the throne. His nephew Edrick withdrew from court, and implored the assistance of Adelwalch king of Suffex, who assembled an army to assert his pretensions. With these succours Edrick, marching into Kent, gave battle to his uncle, who was defeated, and died of the wounds he received in the action. This victory secured Edrick in possession of the crown; while his cousin Richard retiring into Germany, married the sister of Boniface archbishop of Mentz, by whose interest he is said to have been elected king of Suabia. As for the victor, he reigned but two years, in the midst of tumult and confusion, occasioned by the efforts of the last king's party, and the disputes about the succession.

Lotharius  
defeated by  
Edrick, who  
mounts the  
throne.

Offic. Eccl.  
Andr. in  
festo Ric.

During these commotions, Ceadwalla king of Wessex invaded Kent, and ravaged the country without opposition, till at length the Kentishmen, taking to their arms, defeated their enemies; and Mollo, the brother of Ceadwalla, retiring into a house with twelve followers, defended himself with heroic resolution; but the Kentishmen setting fire to the building, he and his gallant companions perished in the flames. His brother, who loved him

Kent invaded  
by Mollo  
the brother  
of the king  
of Wessex.

An.Ch.673. tenderly, did not leave his death unrevenge'd ; but entering Kent at the head of a powerful army, burned, wasted, and destroyed every thing that fell in his way.

J. Brompt.  
Thorn. Po-  
lychron. l.v.

Withred as-  
sumes the  
reins of go-  
vernment in  
Kent,

Kent was by this time reduced to such a deplorable situation, by external enemies and intestine divisions, that no prince had interest or spirit enough to assume the reins of government, and an interregnum, or rather an anarchy of six years ensued. At last Withred, brother of the last king, having found means to allay the fury of civil discord, by his temper and sagacity, ascended the throne, purchased a peace of his enemies, and shared his government with one Swabert, whose interest had enabled him to retrieve the inheritance of his father. This colleague survived his elevation about four years, during which no disturbance invaded the quiet of the kingdom ; and after his death Withred reigned twelve years alone, so as to acquire the esteem and affection of his subjects, who found themselves happy under his administration.

An.Ch.725.

and is suc-  
ceeded by  
his son Ed-  
bert.

He ended his days in peace, and his crown devolved to his son Edbert, whose reign was pacific like that of his father ; and he governed the kingdom three and twenty years in profound tranquillity : indeed this monarchy was now reduced to so low an ebb in point of importance, that it neither excited the jealousy, nor tempted the avarice of the neighbouring princes.

An.Ch.748.

His crown  
devolves to  
Edelbert.

Edbert's crown (as he had no issue) was inherited at his death, by his second brother Edelbert, who imitated the virtues of his predecessor, and associated in the government his own son Ardulph, whom he survived : after a quiet reign of eleven years, he resigned his life, and his crown became the property of his younger brother Aldrick, who was frequently attacked by the neighbouring princes, among whom Offa king of Mercia was the most violent



violent aggressor. Allured by the prospect of conquering Kent, which was now almost incapable of defending itself, he entered the kingdom, at the head of an army; and Aldrick assembling his whole force, made a stand at Orford, where he sustained an overthrow, which would have proved fatal to the independency of his crown, had not the victor been hindered from completing the reduction of Kent, by the jealousy of the other kings, and more particularly by the danger that threatened his own country, which was invaded by the Welsh.

An.Ch.748.

Aldrick's son Alcmund dying before his father, who was now the last of the Hengist race, the crown, at his decease, was disputed by those who had engrossed the greatest share of wealth, interest, and power, and fell into the hands of one Edelbert, surnamed Prin, who reigned two years in peace, but was afterwards invaded, vanquished, and taken prisoner by Cenulph, king of Mercia. The victor carried him into captivity, deprived him of his eye-sight, and filled the vacant throne of Kent with one Cudrid, who absolutely depended upon his will, and paid him a yearly tribute. After this tributary prince had reigned eight years, as the vassal of Cenulph, he died; and was, by the permission of the Mercian king, succeeded by his son Baldred, in whose reign the Saxon heptarchy was dissolved: being defeated by Egbert, he fled to the other side of the Thames, and died in obscurity, while his dominions lying at the mercy of the conqueror, became a province of the West Saxons, after they had been ruled three hundred and seventy-two years, as a separate kingdom.

An.Ch.794.  
Kent becomes a province to the kingdom of the West Saxons.

Malmesb.  
l. i. Sim.  
Dunelm.

An.Ch.805.

## The kingdom of SUSSEX, or the SOUTH SAXONS.

An.Ch. 476.

Ælla,  
founder of  
the kingdom  
of Sussex.

The kingdom of Suffex was one of the least considerable of all the Heptarchy, as it contained only the two provinces of Suffex and Surry, the greatest part of which was covered with a vast forest, which the Saxons called Andreds-wald, from its antient name Anderida. The greatest extent of this petty kingdom, amounted to fifty miles in length, and about forty in breadth, bounded on the north by the river Thames, by the sea on the south, by Kent on the east, and Wessex on the west. The capital was Chichester, built by Cissa, son of the first king Ælla, the manner of whose arrival in England we have already related. He was one of the most illustrious Saxon chiefs, who founded this small monarchy, notwithstanding the formidable opposition of the Britons commanded by Arthur; and for his prowess and capacity was, at the death of Hengist, chosen head of the Saxon confederacy.

An.Ch. 514:

He died after a reign of three and twenty years, reckoned from his coronation to his death, and left his kingdom in peace to Cissa, whose reign is remarkable for nothing but its long duration, exclusive of his building the city we have mentioned, and Cisbury, of which no vestiges remain. Instead of supporting his father's glory, according to the promise of his younger years, he contented himself with the character of a pacific prince, and even paid a yearly proportion of money and troops to Cerdic, king of Wessex, who had raised himself to the chief command of the Saxon communities.

An.Ch. 590.

Suffex in-  
vaded by  
Ceaulin.

Cissa dying without issue, after a reign of twenty-six years, his kingdom was invaded, and his crown usurped by Ceaulin, king of Wessex and monarch of the Anglo-Saxons; and this usurpation was one

cause

cause of the league which was formed against him. An.Ch.590. Nevertheless, his nephew Ceolric, by whom he was vanquished and dispossessed, still retained Suffex as part of his conquest. Not that the South Saxons submitted quietly to the yoke; on the contrary, they made divers attempts to recover their independence. They revolted against Ceolwulph, king of Wessæx, who reduced them to obedience. Their next effort met with better success: for, during the exile of Cenowalch, king of Wessæx, which had fallen under the dominion of the Mercian king Penda, they seized this opportunity of investing Adelwalch with the regal authority. Reduced by Ceolwulph, and recovers its independency.

An.Ch.648. The kingdom of Wessæx was so weakened by the invasion of Penda, who possessed it three whole years, that Cenowalch, after his restoration, could not undertake the enterprize of dethroning the new king of Suffex; for he himself was attacked by Wolphur, king of Mercia, who worsted him in divers encounters; and afterwards penetrating into Suffex, defeated Adelwalch, whom he took prisoner in the battle, and made himself master of that kingdom and the isle of Wight. The captivity of the vanquished king turned to his advantage, inasmuch as he was converted by his conqueror, who not only set him at liberty, but made him a present of the isle of Wight, which he had subdued. This seems to have been given as an addition to his own kingdom, in which he re-assumed the sway after Wolphur's death, and ruled peaceably until his dominions were again invaded by Ceadwalla, a prince of the West Saxons, against whom he took the field, and a battle ensued, in which he was defeated, and slain. Adelwalch is defeated and taken by Wolphur, king of Mercia.

An.Ch.686. Yet even after the death of Adelwalch, the conqueror met with a strong opposition from Authun and Berthun, two of his generals, who had just returned from an expedition into Kent; and before he

- An.Ch.686.** he could make himself master of the throne of Suffex, the king of Wesssex dying he returned to that kingdom, where he mounted the throne: while Authun and Berthun were crowned joint monarchs of Suffex. They did not however long enjoy their elevation without disturbance. Ceadwalla was no sooner established in Wesssex, than he denounced war against them, and gained a battle, in which
- An.Ch.722.** Berthun lost his life. Nevertheless, Authun still possessed the crown dependent upon the conqueror, who, when that prince died, would not suffer the vacant throne to be filled. The South Saxons made divers efforts to deliver themselves from this subjection; but, their measures being ill-concerted, they were wholly reduced by Ina, king of Wesssex, and remained quiet for three years, at the expiration of which, they seized the opportunity of some intestine troubles in Wesssex, and conferred the sovereign power upon Albert, who was vanquished and slain by Ina, under whom the two kingdoms
- An.Ch.780.** were united. Even after all these disasters, the South Saxons revolted while Sigibert occupied the throne of Wesssex, and constituted Osmond their king; but, in all probability they were again subdued by Cenulph the successor of Sigibert; for from this period their country was considered as a province appended to the kingdom of Wesssex.
- Flor. Wig.**  
**Bede, l. v.**

### The kingdom of WESSSEX.

The extent  
of Wesssex.

In the Heptarchy were two English kingdoms, and one Saxon monarchy, which greatly surpassed the rest in grandeur and power, namely, Northumberland; Mercia, occupying the whole space between the Humber, the Thames, and the Severne; and Wesssex, situated to the southward of the Thames, extending in breadth about seventy miles from the Thames to the Channel, and in length

one



one hundred and fifty, from the frontiers of Suffex An.Ch. 519. to the river Tamer, which divided Cornwall from Wales. The principal cities of this monarchy were Winchester the capital, Southampton, Portsmouth, Salisbury, Dorchester, Sherborn, and Exeter, in which a great number of Britons had mingled with the Saxons; and the isle of Wight (as we have already observed) was at first an appendage to this kingdom of the West Saxons, so called from their situation in respect of their countrymen, who had settled in Suffex, Kent, and Essex.

We have already given a circumstantial account Founded by Cerdic. of Cerdic the founder of this monarchy, to whom Arthur ceded the two provinces of Hants and Somerset; and whose kingdom was afterwards augmented by the addition of Berks, Wilts, Devonshire and Dorset, which were yielded to him by a treaty with Mordred. We have likewise mentioned the pacific reign of his son Kenric, whose tranquillity was never interrupted but once, by a war with the Britons, whom he defeated. Nor have we omitted to relate the particular incidents that occurred in the turbulent reign of his son Ceaulin, whose ambition and power attracted the jealousy and hatred of the other Saxon princes, to which he fell a sacrifice. An.Ch. 552.

In consequence of the league that was formed An.Ch. 592. against him, his crown devolved to his nephew Ceolric, whose reign is distinguished by no transaction of moment. But, he was succeeded by Ceolwulf, the son of Cutha, an active prince, whose success against the South Saxons we have already mentioned. His whole life was a continual scene of action either against the Scots and Picts, or Redwald, who had raised himself to the head of the Saxon confederacy. He prospered in all his encounters, and was succeeded by his nephew Cinegils, Speed, Hunting.

An.Ch.592.

The Britons  
defeated at  
Banton.

gils, who, in about a year after his coronation, associated his son Quinchelm in the government. Their reign was signalized by a battle, which they fought with the Britons, who from some motive, of which we are now ignorant, took the field against them, and the two armies, met at Beandune or Banton, supposed to be a place on the borders of Somersetshire. The glittering of the Saxon arms, their battle-axes, long spears, and firm compacted battalions, struck a panic into the hearts of the Britons, which greatly conduced to their overthrow; for they made but a faint resistance, and were totally defeated, with the loss of two thousand men killed upon the field of battle.

An.Ch.615.

Cinegils and  
Quinchelm  
fight a bat-  
tle with  
Penda.

Chron. Sax.

The two Saxon princes were afterwards involved in a war with Penda king of Mercia, though the cause of the quarrel is no more known than the progress of their arms, until they fought the battle near Cirencester, which was maintained with equal obstinacy on both sides, until night parted the combatants, who resolved to renew the fight in the morning: but, day-light presented such a dismal scene of slaughter to their eyes, that they were mutually affected with the loss they had sustained, and foreseeing nothing but the destruction of both armies in another battle, they opened a conference, and a treaty of peace was immediately concluded.

The other transactions that distinguished the reign of those two Saxon princes, will be related in the history of those kingdoms which they conquered; we shall only observe that Cinegils' conversion was effected by the sermons and exhortations of an Italian monk called Berinus, enforced by the political considerations of an advantageous alliance with Oswald king of Northumberland, who professed the christian religion, and married Kiniberg daughter of the Wessexian prince. His brother or son Quinchelm did not immediately follow his ex-  
ample

ample; but being afterwards seized with a dangerous distemper, embraced the true faith, and died immediately after his baptism. Cinegils survived him about seven years, and then resigned his breath, after a glorious reign, in which he and his colleague had acquired the reputation of great and virtuous princes.

An.Ch.615.

An.Ch.636.  
Malmesb.

His successor was his own son Cenwal, a weak prince, who inherited nothing of the father but his crown. He married the sister of Penda king of Mercia, whom he repudiated without any cause assigned, and then renounced the christian religion. Penda, incensed at the outrage offered to his sister, invaded the dominions of this licentious prince, whom he routed, and obliged to fly for refuge to the East Anglian court, where he was, during a residence of three years, reformed by the pious admonition of Annas the East Anglian monarch, and afterwards re-established on the throne which Penda had possessed in his absence\*. Either this prince or some other competitor found means to kindle a civil war in his dominions; for, he fought a battle with his own subjects at Bradford near the river Avon in Northamptonshire.

Cenwal expelled by Penda.

An.Ch.652.

The Britons are vanquished at the hill of Pene.

The Britons, encouraged by the intestine commotions of Cenwal's kingdom, and the damage he had sustained from the arms of Penda, assembled an army and entered his dominions; Cenwal, advancing with his forces to oppose them, was attacked at a hill called Pene in Somersetshire, with such fury that his Saxons began to give ground; but disdaining the thoughts of being worsted by an

\* In all probability Penda set up his cousin Cuthred, the son of Quinchelm, as the rightful heir of the crown; and this pretender was so powerfully supported, that Cenwal was glad to come to a compo-

sition, and purchased a renunciation of Cuthred's claim, with three thousand hides of land, which were granted to that prince, near Ashton, in Northamptonshire, Sax. Chron.

enemy,

An.Ch.658. enemy, whom they had so often defeated, they re-  
 collected all their courage and resolution; and re-  
 turning to the charge with redoubled vigour, ob-  
 tained a complete victory. Though the Britons  
 were thus effectually quelled, he found himself still  
 embroiled with the Mercians, whose king Wul-  
 phur seems to have inherited his predecessor's en-  
 mity to Cenwal, over whom he gained a confi-  
 derable advantage in the battle of Pontesbury in  
 Shropshire; for, he ravaged the country as far as  
 Ashton, and in the course of that same year sub-  
 dued the isle of Wight. After this event Cenwal  
 lived eleven years, during which he enjoyed some  
 respite from the turmoils of war and civil discord,  
 and dying, left his crown to his wife Saxeburga \*.

Hunting.

An.Ch.661.

An.Ch.672.  
Chron. Sax.

She was a princess of great courage and under-  
 standing, who, in all probability, would have go-  
 verned her dominions with equal capacity and suc-  
 cess, had not death prevented the execution of her  
 projects, after she had sat about twelve months  
 upon the throne.

Esquin suc-  
 ceeds to the  
 throne of  
 Wessex.

At her decease the nobles divided the kingdom  
 among themselves, though it appears that this  
 aristocracy was not of long duration; for, in the  
 course of the year that succeeded Saxeburga's death,  
 we find the kingdom possessed by Esquin, descended  
 from the famous Cerdic. This prince had not  
 swayed the sceptre of Wessex two whole years,  
 when he was engaged in a war with Wulphur king  
 of Mercia, whose army he engaged at Bedanheafd,  
 supposed to be Bedwin in Wiltshire, where a bloody  
 battle was fought with great slaughter on both  
 sides, though the advantage remained with the  
 Mercian: but, he did not long enjoy the fruits of  
 his victory, which preceded his death but a few

An.Ch.679.  
Hunting.

\* We learn from the Saxon his reign, he built St. Peter's church  
 Chronicle, that in the first year of at Winchester.



months; and Escuin died about two years after he ascended the throne. He was succeeded by Centwin, another son of the late king Cinegils, who obtained several victories over the Britons, whom he repelled even to the western shore; and his success obliged their king Cadwallader to go in person, and demand succours of the king of Armorica. That prince afterwards made a journey to Rome, where he died.

An.Ch.676.

His successor is Centwin,

Towards the latter end of Centwin's reign, he conceived a jealousy of his kinsman Ceadwalla, a prince of great hopes, who had won the affections of the people, and acquired a popularity which Centwin thought dangerous to his throne. He therefore ordered him to quit the kingdom; and he retired into Suffex with a numerous train of attendants in arms, so as to give umbrage to Adelwalch sovereign of that country, who assembled a body of troops to expel that adventurer, and (as we have already observed) lost his life in the attempt. The victorious Ceadwalla wanted to seize the throne of Suffex, but was prevented by the valour of Authun and Berthun; and Centwin dying in the interim, he returned to Wesssex, of which he was elected king, without opposition.

who banishes Ceadwalla.

An.Ch.686.  
Ann. Sax.

Whatever happiness the conduct of his youth might have promised to his subjects, certain it is he was savage and cruel almost beyond example. After having terminated the war against Authun and Berthun to his own advantage, he invaded and ravaged the country of Kent; and afterwards attacked the isle of Wight, which had depended upon the kingdom of Suffex, ever since Wulphur had bestowed it upon Adelwalch. Arwalt brother of Authun was at that time governor of the island, which he attempted to defend; but being overpowered by numbers, was obliged to retire and leave the inhabitants at the mercy of the victor, who

Ceadwalla butchers the inhabitants of the isle of Wight.

An.Ch.686. who behaved upon this occasion with such brutal barbarity as must render his name infamous to all posterity. Being apprehensive that the people of the isle of Wight would take the first opportunity of withdrawing their necks from his yoke, he resolved to exterminate them on pretence of their being idolators; and actually executed this cruel massacre upon all the inhabitants, except two hundred families, which with their lands and effects he presented to his prime minister Wilfred, bishop of Selsey, who accepted of the donation with a view to convert those poor souls to Christianity. Two sons of Arwalt made shift to escape to Stoneham, in Hampshire, where they for some time concealed themselves from the cruelty of this tyrant; but at last they were discovered and put to death, after the abbot of Reodford, now Redbridge, had been permitted to make them proselytes to the christian religion, of which Ceadwalla's conduct must have certainly given them a very sublime and favourable idea. For, though he had not yet formally abjured paganism, he affected great zeal for the church, and even bestowed upon it a tythe of all the spoils and plunder he had made: a very effectual attonement, in consideration of which the clergy gave him absolution for all the villanies he could perpetrate.

He is baptized by pope Sergius II.

Kent likewise felt the inhumanity of his disposition, when he took vengeance on that country for the death of his brother Mollo. At length he set out for Rome, to receive baptism from the hands of the pope, who could not refuse that favour to such a munificent benefactor of the church. He was accordingly christened by Sergius II. who bestowed upon him the name of Peter; and dying soon after his baptism, was buried in St. Peter's church, where his tomb is distinguished by an inscription.

• He w

Nº.

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scription, signifying his name, age, quality, and time of his decease. An.Ch.686.

The two sons he left by his wife Cenditha being minors, he was succeeded by his kinsman \* Ina, the most renowned and illustrious of all the kings who had reigned in England since the establishment of the Saxon heptarchy. In less than a year after he mounted the throne of Wessex, he was declared monarch of the Anglo-Saxons; a remarkable proof of the great character he had already acquired. One of the first steps he took after his elevation to the supreme authority, was to compile a body of laws which served as the groundwork of those afterwards published by Alfred: he likewise convoked a general council of the clergy; in which it was determined that all the churches, monasteries, and places of religious worship, which had gone to ruin or decay, should be forthwith rebuilt and repaired; and indeed the monkish historians have been so engrossed with his pious benefactions, that they have given a very confused detail of the other incidents in his reign. Certain it is, he marched into Kent in order to take further vengeance for the death of his kinsman Mollo, and the king of that country purchased his forbearance with a large sum of money.

Is succeeded by Ina, who compiles a body of laws.

An.Ch.688.

His next expedition was against the Britons of Cornwall, part of whose country he reduced under his own dominion: then he declared war against Ceolred, king of Mercia, though we are ignorant of the provocation, and the two armies meeting at Woodenberg, in Wilts, fought an obstinate battle, in which Ina gained the advantage; and lastly, he subdued the South Saxons, who had revolted and set up a king of their own.

His wars with the Britons, Mercians, and South Saxons.

Malmesb. Polychron. Ann. Sax.

An.Ch.715.

\* He was grandson of Ceolwald, descended in a direct line from Cerdic.

An.Ch.715.  
His munifi-  
cence to the  
church,  
journey to  
Rome, and  
abdication.

But that which dignified his character, in the eyes of the clergy, above all his military exploits, was his munificence to the church, and the resignation of his crown, to which he was persuaded partly by his own conscience, and partly by the pious suggestions of his wife Ethelburga. Before he executed this resolution, which was unworthy of a great prince, he made a journey to Rome, in order to confer with pope Gregory II. and during his residence in that city erected the English college, for the reception of the ecclesiastics that should go thither from England, and the entertainment of the English kings and princes, who might be seized with an inclination to go and visit the tombs of the apostles. For the maintenance of this college and the adjoining church, he assigned as a fund the famous tax of Peter Pence, which, though at first an elemosynary donation, was in the sequel claimed by the popes as a legal revenue. He revisited his own country, in order to establish this imposition, and take leave of his wife Ethelburga, who retired into the monastery of Berking: then returning to Rome, he assumed the habit of a monk and died in contempt and obscurity.

An.Ch.727.

Succeeded  
by Ethel-  
hard.

At his departure from England, he left the crown to his kinsman Ethelhard, who ascended the throne with the consent of the general assembly; though notwithstanding this sanction, it was disputed with him by Oswald, a prince of the blood, who found means to interest a great part of the kingdom in his cause; but the king, who was better supported, having defeated him in a pitched battle, he did not long survive his overthrow; and Ethelhard's reign was molested by no other disturbance, during the sixteen years he lived after his coronation.

An.Ch.743.  
Cuthred de-  
feats the  
Britons,

His authority devolved to his relation Cuthred, who in the beginning of his reign was embroiled with Ethelbald king of Mercia; but that difference being



being compromised, they united their forces and marched against the Britons, who were totally defeated at Cornwall. In about two years after this achievement, he lost his son Kenric, who was slain in a sedition of the soldiers, excited by a nobleman whose name was Ethelul; and this officer putting himself at the head of an handful of revolvers, fought with such amazing courage, that he was with great difficulty overpowered by the whole force of the king, who, admiring his valour and capacity, not only pardoned his crime, but appointed him general of his army; a station in which he justified Cuthred's generosity and judgment. Another rupture happening between this prince and Ethelbald, king of Mercia, Ethelul commanded the army of the West Saxons, and to his prowess alone his master owed the victory which was obtained over the Mercians.

An.Ch.743.

and obtained  
a victory  
over the  
Mercians.An.Ch.754.  
Bede, Cont.  
An. Saxon.

Cuthred afterwards led his victorious troops against the Britons of Cornwall, part of which he united to his own kingdom, and died in the fourteenth year of his reign, leaving his crown to his nephew Sigebert.

This worthless prince soon incurred the contempt and hatred of his subjects, by his impotence of mind, debauchery, and cruel disposition; inspired by which, he murdered one of his own counts, out of meer wantonness. His subjects alarmed at these outrages, removed him from the throne, to which they raised Kenewulf, a prince of the blood, who allowed the deposed monarch the revenues of Hampshire for his subsistence. But not contented with the comforts of a private station, he began to raise disturbances in the state; and being driven from his possessions, fled for shelter to the forest of Anderida, in which he was slain by a swineherd.

Sigebert is  
dethroned,  
and his  
throne given  
to Kenewulf.

Kenewulf, in order to divert his subjects from examining too nicely his title to the throne, which

who is murdered by  
Cunehard,

An.Ch.754. could not bear inquiry, while his predecessor's brother Cunehard was still in being, resolved to gild over the flaw with the glory of his military achievements, and turned his arms against the Britons, over whom he acquired many signal victories. But, still he looked with an eye of jealousy upon Cunehard, who perceiving his disquiet, resolved to prevent the consequences of it; and having engaged some adherents in the enterprize, took an opportunity of falling upon the king, in the house of a lady whom that prince used to visit in private. Kenewulf, thus attacked, defended himself with great valour, and even wounded his adversary, but was overpowered by numbers, and fell dead upon the spot. The few noblemen who attended him thither, broke into the apartment, and were all cut in pieces by the conspirators. But Cunehard did not long enjoy the fruits of his execrable treason; for, next morning, the friends of the king, headed by Osric the eolderman and Wiverth his thane, advanced against the regicides; and though Cunehard endeavoured to bring them over to his interest with large promises of honours and rewards, they disdained his offers, broke down the gates of the town to which he had retired, and as he refused to surrender, attacked him sword in hand. The traitor, thus beset, fought with desperate courage; till at last, he and all his accomplices were cut in pieces.

Malmesb.  
Hunting.  
Hoveden.

Brithric, his  
successor,  
conceives a  
jealousy of  
Egbert,

Having thus revenged the murder of their king, and performed his funeral obsequies at Winchester, they filled the vacant throne with his son Brithric, who was a prince of a pacific disposition, and piqued himself more upon making his people happy under a well-regulated administration, than in acquiring a less solid reputation for military exploits. Notwithstanding this meekness and moderation, he could not help conceiving an ungenerous jealousy from

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from the great qualities of Egbert, a prince of the blood, whose amiable character had won the affections of the people. He no sooner discovered the dangerous predicament in which he stood, than he retired to the court of Offa the Mercian king; where meeting with a cold reception, on account of a match which was at that juncture concluded between Brithric and Offa's daughter Edburga, he made a voyage to France, where Charlemagne received him with great hospitality, and on different occasions honoured him with singular marks of esteem. He resided at the court of this great prince about twelve years, during which he improved his natural talents with such cultivation and experience, as afterwards enabled him to execute the grand project of uniting the different kingdoms of the Anglo-Saxons into one monarchy.

An.Ch.754

who retires to the court of Charlemagne.

Flor. Wig.

The Danes make a descent at Portland.

An.Ch.787.

At this period, the Danes had rendered themselves famous for the same piratical practices by which the Saxons had formerly been distinguished; they were now become terrible to all the northern coasts of Europe, and in the course of their expeditions, a body of them landed from three ships at Portland. A descent made by such an inconsiderable number, did not much alarm the neighbourhood; the magistrate of the district marched with a small force, in order to take them prisoners, and convey them to Dorchester jail; but they soon convinced him of his mistake, and attacked him with such fury that he and almost all his followers were slain. Aroused at the fate of their countrymen, the English poured in upon the enemy from all quarters; so that they were obliged to retreat to their ships without their booty.

Mean while Brithric atoned for his cruelty to Egbert, by the wisdom and equity of his government, and was universally beloved by his subjects, when he fell a sacrifice to the intrigues of his queen Edburga,

Brithric poisoned by his queen.

An. Ch. 787. Edburga, who deprived him of his life by means of poison; and then fled to the continent, where she ended her days in beggary and exile.

Malmesb.  
i. ii.

Her crime was so enormous and detestable in the eyes of the West Saxons, that they immediately enacted a law, forbidding the wives of all succeeding kings to assume the title of queen, on pain of the husband's being deprived of his royalty, and the subject absolved from his oath of allegiance. This step was no sooner taken than they sent an honourable embassy, with an offer of the crown to Egbert, who had accompanied Charlemagne in his expedition to Rome, where he now received the ambassadors, and resolved to comply with their invitation.

An. Ch. 800.

### Of the kingdom of NORTHUMBERLAND.

Its extent  
and division.

The kingdom of Northumberland was divided on the south from Mercia, by the river Humber; the Irish sea bounded it on the west; it was washed on the east by the German ocean; and extended to the north a considerable way into Lothian. It comprehended the provinces now called Lancashire, Cumberland, Westmorland, Northumberland, and Yorkshire, and the bishopric of Durham; and its chief towns were York, Durham or Dunelm, Carlisle, called by the Romans Luguballia, Hexam or Hagulstadt, and Lancaster. This extent of country, amounting to one hundred and sixty miles in length, and about one hundred at its broadest part, was formerly divided into two provinces, called Deira and Bernicia, and these were at one time two independent kingdoms, the first consisting of the southern parts, and the other beginning at the north side of the wall built by Severus. But this division did not take place till the death of Ida, who founded the monarchy, and bequeathed Bernicia



nia to his son Adda, while his other son Alla succeeded to the kingdom of Deira. An.Ch. 559.

We know nothing of the first four kings that succeeded Adda, except their names, which were Clappa, Theodulph, Freothulf, Theodric, and Ederic, who mounted the throne in his old age, and associated his son Ethelfrid as his coadjutor in the government. This prince having married Acca daughter of Alla king of Deira, seized upon that kingdom at the death of his father-in-law, though he had left an infant son called Edwin. The first four kings.  
An.Ch. 586.

Ethelfrid, after his father's decease, became very powerful and terrible to his enemies the Scots, who made frequent incursions into his territories, not only for the sake of plunder, but also in compliance with the solicitations of the Britons, with whom the Scottish king Aidan had engaged in an offensive and defensive alliance. It was probably at their instigation that this monarch, even in his old age, invaded the territories of Ethelfrid, who engaging him at Degraften, when his men were loaded with plunder, an obstinate battle ensued, in which, though Aidan was defeated, the Northumbrian king's brother Theobald, and a great number of Saxons, were slain. Whether Ethelfrid repented the behaviour of the Britons, who had persuaded Aidan to invade his dominions, or instigated by the remonstrances of Augustin, whose jurisdiction had been rejected by the British bishops, he advanced at the head of his victorious troops to besiege Chester, which was occupied by the Britons, who resolved to stand battle; and in the mean time brought out about twelve hundred monks from the immense monastery of Bangor, to pray in the open plain for their success, during the engagement. Notwithstanding this spiritual assistance, Ethelfrid obtained a complete victory, the miserable ecclesiastics were massacred, and the town being taken, Ethelfrid defeats Aidan king of Scotland, obtains a victory over the Britons, and orders twelve hundred monks to be massacred.  
Buchan. l.v.  
An.Ch. 613.

An.Ch.613. the victor ordered the monastery to be razed to the ground.

He threatens  
Redwald  
king of East  
Anglia for  
protecting  
his brother-  
in-law Ed-  
win.

While Ethelfrid thus aggrandized himself at the expence of his enemies, Edwin his brother-in-law wandered from place to place, in quest of assistance that might enable him to retrieve his inheritance; and though he could find no prince that would run the risque of incurring the resentment of the usurper in his behalf, he was hospitably received by Redwald king of East Anglia, who sympathized with his distress, and conceived an affection for his character. But, he had not long enjoyed the happiness of this retreat, when Ethelfrid sent a embassy with the offer of an alternative to Redwald, importing that he should either deliver up the refugee, in consideration of a certain sum of money to be paid for his head, or bear the brunt of a bloody war, in quality of Edwin's protector.

He is de-  
feated and  
slain near  
the river  
Idel in Not-  
tingham-  
shire.

Redwald, allured by the bribe, and intimidated by the menaces of such a formidable monarch, for some time wavered between his glory and convenience; but was at length determined by the suggestions of his conscience, reinforced with the mediation of his queen, in favour of the young prince, to whom he had granted an asylum\*. In these sentiments he assembled his forces without delay, in hopes of falling upon Ethelfrid before he should be prepared for his reception; and, dividing his army into three separate bodies, gave the command of the first to his son Reyner, with order to advance and take possession of a certain pass, while he himself followed at a small distance, and the last division was brought up by Edwin. But Reyner

\* The story of the apparition, by which Edwin is said to have been accosted in the garden, is either a ridiculous legend, adopted by the credulity of Bede and others writers, who recount it; or the person who appeared, knowing that Redwald

had already taken a resolution in his favour, was some christian, who chose this method of securing an influence with the young prince, who solemnly promised to be directed by his counsel.

giving

giving way to the impetuosity of his courage, left An.Ch.613. his father too far behind to be properly sustained; and Ethelfrid, who had already taken the field, encountering him near the river Idel, in Nottinghamshire, he lost his life, and his troops were routed with great slaughter. Redwald enraged, but not dispirited by the loss of his son, advanced with the remaining part of his army, and attacked the Northumbrians, fatigued with action and disordered in the pursuit; and here the battle was renewed with equal ferocity on both sides, till the troops of Ethelfrid being overpowered by the number of the East-Anglians, headed by Redwald raging like a lioness robbed of her young, and animated by the example of the gallant Edwin, could no longer withstand the shock, but fled with great precipitation. Ethelfrid seeing his men give way, notwithstanding all his efforts to rally their broken battalions, and scorning to outlive the disgrace of an overthrow, rushed furiously into the midst of the enemy, where he fell covered with wounds, after having performed miracles of personal valour.

The victorious Redwald marched directly into An.Ch.617. Northumberland, where he met with no opposition; Hen. Hunt. for Ethelfrid's three sons Anfrid, Oswald, and Edwin takes possession of the Northumbrian throne. Oswy, had fled for refuge into Scotland: he, therefore, received the submission of the Northumbrians, without exception. Far from using the rights of a conqueror to their prejudice, he generously established Edwin in the possession of both kingdoms, though his claim had been limited to Diera alone, and contented himself with the glory of such a generous expedition.

Edwin being thus unexpectedly raised, from the condition of an hopeless fugitive to the possession of two powerful kingdoms, employed the first years of his reign in civilizing his subjects, who were

An.Ch.617. were savaged by the continual wars and ravages which had so long prevailed between them and their neighbours of North Britain. He not only enacted wise laws and regulations for punishing rapine, and restraining the ferocity of the common people, but ordered these institutions to be executed with such punctuality, that in a little time, peace and order reigned throughout the whole kingdom \*.

Bede, l. ii.

He is elected head of the Saxon confederacy, marries Ethelburga, and becomes a convert to Christianity.

After the death of Redwald, who had been raised to the supreme power over all the kings of the Heptarchy, Edwin, who always respected him as a benefactor, openly declared his design of possessing that dignity : and no prince disputed his pretensions but Quinchelm king of Wessex, who by this opposition brought upon himself a war which endangered his dominions, and compelled him at last to sue for peace. This contention being terminated by the treaty, he was vested with the sovereign command ; and the Britons, whom he threatened to invade, consented to pay a tribute, rather than incur the effects of his indignation.

Thus aggrandized by a chain of successful events, part of which he owed to fortune, and part to his own superior talents, he began to extend the authority with which he had been lately invested, and pretended to exert an absolute dominion over all the other kings of the Heptarchy. He had formerly been married to a sister of the Mercian king ; but she dying, he now resolved to espouse Ethelburga, sister to Eadbald king of Kent, a princess of great merit, who would have doubtless rejected any match, howsoever advantageous, with a pagan, had not she been animated with the zeal of converting

\* We are told by Bede, that he ordered wells to be made and supplied with brass cups or ladles in the most dry and desert parts of his kingdom, for the accommodation

of thirsty travellers ; and that a woman with an infant in her arms might have walked over the whole kingdom without fear of violence,

him



him and his subjects to the christian religion. *Be- An.Ch.617,* fore she would give her consent, however, it was solemnly stipulated that she should have the free exercise of her own worship, and be attended by bishop Paulinus, who propagated the gospel among the Northumbrian infidels, and was instrumental in the conversion of Edwin himself. After he had defeated Quinchelm, and ravaged the country of Wesssex with great severity, he returned to his own kingdom, and began to discover signs of uneasiness touching the religion he professed: the queen, assisted by Paulinus, had not failed to prepossess his mind in favour of Christianity; but he still retained scruples which they had not been able to remove, and this uncertainty produced disquiet and perturbation. While he thus hesitated between the true faith and idolatry, his determination was influenced by the conduct of his prime minister Coifi, who was at the same time chief priest of his ancient religion. This pontiff, being a man of moderation and good understanding, joined the queen and Paulinus, declared in favour of Christianity, and with his own hands demolished the idols which he had formerly adored. Such a remarkable instance of conviction had a wonderful effect upon the king, who was soon after baptized, with all his court, at York, of which he created Paulinus bishop.

His new religion did not seem to teach him humility: for, he grew every day more and more absolute and imperious, and on solemn occasions ordered a globe to be carried before him, to denote the union of the Heptarchy under his sovereign command. His ambition and insolence of power excited the jealousy and resentment of all the Anglo-Saxon princes; and in particular inflamed the indignation of Penda the Mercian king, who was naturally fierce and impatient, and longed passionately for an occasion to shake off the dominion of the

He is vanquished and slain at Hatfield in Yorkshire by Ceadwalla king of the Britons, and Penda king of Mercia.

An.Ch.617. the Northumbrian monarch. Nor did he long wait for an opportunity: Ceadwalla king of the Britons, whom he had distressed and saddled with a tribute, conferred with Penda upon their mutual disgrace in submitting to the sway of a prince who was in no respect their superior; and finding their sentiments agree upon the subject, resolved to dispute his preheminance. With this view they immediately joined their forces, and advanced as far as Hatfield, in the West-riding of Yorkshire, where they found Edwin ready to give them battle. The engagement began with desperate fury on both sides; and though the confederates had greatly the advantage in number, they in all probability would have yielded at last to the capacity of Edwin and the discipline of his troops, had not an accident deprived him of that cool deliberation and presence of mind which he had hitherto preserved. His son Offrid fell at his feet transfixed with an arrow; and this spectacle filled his breast with tumults of rage and distraction. Without regarding the posture of his men, or the disposition of the battle, he rushed singly into the thickest body of the enemy; and his retreat being cut off, was immediately dispatched by a multitude of weapons. When their king disappeared, the Northumbrians were seized with consternation, and abandoned the field of battle, leaving a complete victory to the allies, which they prosecuted with the utmost inhumanity, Northumberland being in no condition to resist their arms, they ravaged the whole country with fire and sword; and the British prince, who professed Christianity, acted like a savage beast of prey thirsting after human blood. Effrid the son of Edwin dreading the sanguinary disposition of this brutal monster, surrendered himself to the king of Mercia, who received him at first with some degree of humanity, and afterwards ordered him to be

Bede, l. ii.  
Barbarity of  
the victors.

be butchered in his presence; as for queen Ethelburga, she fled with Paulinus to her brother the Kentish king, who bestowed on her some lands, where she founded a monastery in which she ended her days; and the good prelate was created bishop of Rochester.

An.Ch.617.

Thorn. hist.  
abbot. Can-  
terb.

Camden in  
Cant.

Osrick and  
Anfrid are  
routed and  
slain.

The Northumbrians, driven to despair by the barbarity of their conquerors, resolved to perish sword in hand, rather than fall tamely the victims of such inhuman tyrants; and, in order to make a last effort to retrieve their liberty, the people of Deira chose Osrick, a relation of Edwin, for their king; while the Bernicians placed upon their throne Anfrid the son of Ethelfrid, who, after his father's death, had fled with his brothers Oswald and Oswy into Scotland, where all three had embraced the christian religion.

These two kings were no sooner established on their thrones, than they returned to their pagan worship; though they did not long survive their apostacy. Osrick having rashly presumed to besiege Ceadwalla in York, the British prince made a furious sally, routed the besiegers with great slaughter, and left their new king lying dead upon the spot; then he marched against the sovereign of Bernicia, whom he attacked by surprize, and made a terrible carnage, in the midst of which Anfrid lost his life.

An.Ch.633;

Malmesb.  
l. i.

These victories were attended with horrible cruelties and all species of oppression, exercised against the Northumbrians by Ceadwalla, who now treated them like the worst of traitors, because they had attempted to recover their independency. Their groans reached the ears of Oswald, still an exile in Scotland, who formed the generous resolution of relieving the distress of his countrymen, though at the extreme hazard of his life; for that purpose he collected an handful of men, and marched against the

An.Ch.634.  
Oswald ob-  
tains a com-  
plete victory  
over Cead-  
walla, who  
loses his life  
in the battle.

An.Ch.634. the tyrant, who looking upon him with infinite contempt, went forth to meet him in full assurance of victory. Oswald, being informed of his approach, intrenched himself in an advantageous post at Halidown, and erecting a cross in the front of his camp, commanded the whole army to fall upon their knees, and impore the assistance of heaven. Animated by this act of devotion, they waited with fortitude for the assault; and Ceadwalla advancing at the head of his troops, in order to force their entrenchments, received an arrow in his heart, which instantly put an end to his life. This accident overwhelmed his forces with consternation: confusion ensued; then the Northumbrians taking advantage of their disorder, sallied from their camp, and fell upon them with such vigour, that they were entirely routed. A defeat in which Oswald thought the hand of the Lord was so manifest on his side, that he called the place on which the battle was fought Heoffenselt, or Heaven's-field.

Bede, l. iii.

The great character of Oswald, who is defeated and killed by Penda king of Mercia.

By this great victory, Oswald was put in possession of the two Northumbrian kingdoms, to both which he was heir by his father Ethelfrid, and his mother Acca, who was Edwin's sister. He began his reign with the establishment of excellent regulations; so that the people soon forgot the calamities they had undergone. Being a prince of natural capacity, cultivated with proper education, he took effectual measures for softening and polishing the manners of his rude Northumbrians; and lost no opportunity of propagating Christianity, and promoting the interests of the church. His learning was extensive, and his charity unlimited; insomuch that it was his constant practice to send food to the poor from his own table; and he frequently ordered the silver dishes that contained it to be broken and divided among the necessitous. Such virtue could not fail to win the affection of his



his people: the clergy revered him as a saint, and the other Saxon princes raised him to the supreme command of their confederacy. The tranquillity and happiness of his reign was interrupted by the unquiet spirit of Penda the Mercian king, who, impatient of Oswald's character and superior station, resolved to destroy that prince, as the great obstacle to his ambitious designs. He therefore suddenly assembled his forces, and began his march for Northumberland, where he hoped to find his rival unprepared. This was really the case with Oswald, who nevertheless advanced against him with the small number of troops that were at hand, and lost his life in the battle that ensued, at a place which thence took the name of Oswestre.

An.Ch.634.

An.Ch.642.

The victor used his good fortune with all that insolence and barbarity which was peculiar to his character: he ordered the body of Oswald to be cut in pieces, and exposed upon poles in the middle of the field: then he laid waste the whole country of Northumberland; and undertook the siege of Bambury, which was built by Ida. But meeting with more resistance than he expected, he desisted from the enterprize, and directed his march towards East Anglia, which he hoped to subdue by the terror of his arms.

An.Ch.643.

His retreat afforded breathing time to the Northumbrians, who saw no safety but under the shadow of regal authority; and therefore the Bernicians filled their throne with Oswy the brother of Oswald, while the Deirians presented their crown to Oswin the son of Ofrick, who had been defeated and slain by Ceadwalla.

Oswy and Oswin are elected kings of Northumberland.

A very good understanding subsisted between these two princes, while they dreaded a fresh invasion from Penda; but, as soon as he was engaged in other wars, Oswy resolved to make himself master of his brother's whole succession. Oswin,

The latter is put to death by the former.

An.Ch.463. win, who was a prince of mean parts and great devotion, endeavoured by pacific proposals to divert Oswy from his purpose: and these proving ineffectual, he was obliged at last to have recourse to arms; but before the armies came in sight of each other, he was so shocked at the prospect of shedding christian blood, that he resolved to retire into a convent, and in the mean time withdrawing privately from his troops, he repaired to the house of a count, whom he believed a faithful adherent; and that traitor betrayed him to Oswy, who cruelly deprived him of his life. Yet this barbarous homicide did not answer his expectation; for the Deirians detesting the action, and dreading the government of such a bloody tyrant, immediately chose a successor to Oswin in the person of Athelwalt, son of the illustrious Oswald, a prince better calculated than his predecessor, for wielding the scepter of Northumberland.

Athelwalt  
engages in a  
league with  
the kings of  
East Anglia  
and Mercia.

As he knew the disposition and claim of his uncle Oswy, he resolved to support his own pretensions by means of alliances, and gladly listened to the proposals of the East Anglian king, and Penda, who, though turned of seventy-eight, retained his enmity to the Northumbrians, and projected a league against Oswy, in which Athelwalt readily engaged. The king of Bernicia, alarmed at this alliance, omitted no step which he thought could avert the storm, and even offered a sum of money to Penda, provided he would desist from his enterprize. But finding the confederates deaf to all his proposals, he began to make preparations for his own defence; and obliged himself by a vow to found twelve monasteries, and make one of his daughters a nun, in case God should maintain his cause against such powerful enemies.

Malm. 1. i.  
The battle  
of Aar.

The opposite armies met on the banks of the Aar in Yorkshire; but by that time Athelwalt re-

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reflecting that he should, in all probability, become a prey to the conqueror, whether victory should declare for Penda or for Oswy, he resolved to stand neuter during the engagement, that he might be in a condition to defend himself from the designs of the victor. Penda and the East Anglian king, without suspecting his intention, attacked the Bernicians with great fury: but their forces perceiving Athelwalt wheeling off with his Northumbrians, concluded themselves betrayed, and giving ground immediately, their two chiefs were slain in endeavouring to rally and bring them back to the charge. Immediately after this battle, which was fought at a place called Winfield, Oswy penetrated into Mercia, which he subdued without opposition, the sons of Penda being obliged to fly for refuge into another kingdom: this conquest he enjoyed about three years, during which he was elected chief of the Saxon confederacy, a station which had remained unfilled since the death of his brother Oswald; but, at length his officers exercised such severities in Mercia, that the natives took to their arms, and driving the Northumbrians out of the kingdom, placed Wolpher, the son of Penda, upon the throne.

An. Ch. 670.

Oswy, however, soon consoled himself for this loss, with the acquisition of Deira, in which he succeeded Athelwalt, who died without issue. But this re-union of the kingdoms was not of long duration; for Oswy bestowed Deira upon his natural son Alfrid, and died in peace, after a reign of eight and twenty years, the beginning of which had been full of trouble, and stained by the criminal effects of his ambition; but he afterwards compounded with heaven, by the religious performance of his vows, and erecting a monastery on the spot where Oswin was murdered; and the venerable

Oswy becomes religious and munificent to the church.

NUMB. V.

O

Bede

An.Ch.670.

Bede, l. iv.

Bede ranks him among the best and most illustrious princes of the Saxon Heptarchy.

He was succeeded in the double dignity of Saxon monarch and king of Northumberland, by his son Egfrid, under whom Deira and Bernicia were again united; for the death of Oswy was no sooner known to the Deirians, than they revolted against Alfrid, who retired into Ireland, and devoted his time to study, until he should find a favourable opportunity to retrieve his fortune.

Egfrid expels  
bishop Wil-  
fred from his  
see, is de-  
feated by the  
Scots, and  
afterwards  
loses his  
army, and  
his life,  
in a battle  
with the  
Picts.

Egfrid was a prince of great activity and ambition. Being invaded by Wolpher, king of Mercia, he compelled him to retire to his own dominions with considerable loss. By the persuasion of his wife Ermenburga, he expelled bishop Wilfred from his see, on account of the fastidious pride and dangerous influence of that prelate. The sentence was executed by the archbishop of Canterbury and three other bishops: and Wilfred appealed to the pope, who decreed in full synod that he should be restored to his see; but Egfrid set the pope and his decree at defiance. This enterprising prince resolving to make a conquest of Ireland, sent an army into that island, under the command of one Bertfrid, who ravaged the country, plundered and destroyed churches and monasteries, and massacred the inhabitants without mercy or distinction. This conduct exasperated the Irish to such a degree, that though at first they were disposed to submit, they had now recourse to their arms, which they used so effectually, that the invader was fain to re-embark his army, after having sustained considerable damage. Egfrid, disappointed in this quarter, turned his arms towards Scotland, in direct violation of the treaty he had concluded with the Scottish king Eugenius, and in conjunction with the Picts, wasted that country as far as Galloway with fire and sword. But Eugenius was prepared for his reception, and found

means



means to detach the Picts from his interest, then attacked him with such impetuosity, that his army was cut in pieces, and himself so wounded that he could scarce escape to his own dominions. Next year, in order to be revenged upon the Picts for their treachery, he advanced into their country, and the enemy fled before him, until he was drawn into an ambuscade, among marshes, woods, and mountains; then they fell upon him with great fury, and he lost his army and his life together.

An.Ch.670,

Buchan. l.v.

An.Ch.686,

By this defeat the kingdom of Northumberland was left naked and exposed to the victorious Picts, the Scots, and the Britons, who invaded it on all sides, and re-united to their dominions the several territories of which they had been dismembered by the Saxon monarchs.

An.Ch.705.

As Egfrid died without issue, the Northumbrians recalled Alfrid from Ireland, but, before he could ascend the throne, the enemy had secured themselves in their conquests, and all he could do was to defend the remaining part of his dominions from their incessant incursions. In the midst of these alarms he reigned twenty years, and left his son Osred almost in his infancy, under the guardianship of a nobleman called Brithric. Alfrid seems to have been a prince of excellent talents, and a spirit unbroke by adversity, and unterrified by danger: he cultivated a friendship with Eugenius, king of Scotland, who, like himself, was well versed in the learning of the times; and asserted his independency of the see of Rome, in hindering Wilfred to take possession of his bishopric, notwithstanding the decree he had obtained.

Alfrid reigns with spirit and reputation.

Ann. Sax.

The minority of Osred flattered the ambitious views of a nobleman called Eadwulf, who usurped the throne, and for some time managed the reins of government. Osred and his tutor retired to the fortress of Banbury, in which they were besieged

Osred is vanquished and slain by Kenred and Osric.

An.Ch.705. by the usurper, who in all probability might have enjoyed his acquisition in peace, had he consented to the restoration of Wilfred, whose party was by this time greatly augmented. But, far from complying with the papal decree, he swore by his salvation, that if the prelate would not quit the kingdom in six days, his whole company should be put to death. This declaration was the cause of his own ruin; for, Wilfred throwing all his interest in the opposite scale, Osred's party became so powerful, that the usurper was obliged to raise the siege with precipitation: then Brithric quitting Banbury, put himself at the head of the prince's adherents, and Eadwulf being abandoned and taken, was beheaded as a traitor.

Flor. Wig-  
horn.

Osred, as he advanced in years, became more and more addicted to sensuality: he is said to have deflowered and even ravished several nuns, and to have plunged himself into all manner of debauchery: but, the most enormous vice in his composition, was his contempt of the clergy, which proved the means of his destruction: for they united all their interest and power in setting up Kenred and Osric, descended from a bastard of Ida, as competitors for his crown, and enabling them to give battle to the king, who was vanquished and slain in the nineteenth year of his age.

Malmesb.  
l. i.  
fluntingd.  
l. ii.

An.Ch.716.

Cealwulph  
renounces  
his crown,  
and turns  
monk.

He was succeeded in his throne by the victorious Kenred, who enjoyed it two years; and when he died, it devolved to Osric, whose reign of eleven years is distinguished by no remarkable transactions. He bequeathed his crown to his relation Cealwulph, brother to his predecessor Kenred; and this prince, after having reigned seven or eight years, turned monk, and ended his days in the monastery of Lindisfarne. His crown he resigned to his nephew Egbert, who was scarce settled on the throne, when the northern parts of his domi-

nions

nions were invaded by the Picts, while the Mercians made incursions over the southern frontiers, from which they returned loaded with plunder. In all probability he was afterwards exposed to civil disturbances, raised by some prince of the blood, whose pretensions were supported by Kinewulph, bishop of Lindisfarne, whom the king besieged in his church, and conveyed prisoner to Banbury.

Sim. Dunelm.

Egbert, towards the latter end of his reign, concluded a treaty with Onnuft king of the Picts; and these two princes joining their forces, invaded the kingdom of Areclute, possessed by the Britons, where they made themselves masters of the capital Dunbritton, which surrendered upon capitulation. This country, formerly the Cumbrian kingdom, had been conquered by the Saxon kings of Northumberland, and united to their dominions, from which it was again dismembered by the Britons in the reign of Alfrid; now again it reverted to Egbert, after he had defeated Deobama the British prince or general, who marched to the relief of Dunbritton.

Egbert defeats the Britons, and takes the city of Dunbritton.

Egbert certainly possessed great talents as a prince, and acquired such reputation by his success in war, that Pepin, king of France, courted his friendship, and even bribed him to a treaty of alliance with many valuable presents: but, there was one weak part in his mind, which derogated from the dignity of his character. This was a silly enthusiasm, which prompted him to abdicate his crown and retire into a monastery; notwithstanding the dissuasive arguments against such a pitiful ambition, used by his neighbour princes, who even offered him part of their dominions, provided he would continue to manage the reins of government. He persisted in his resolution, and actually renounced the world, leaving his crown to his son

He abdicates the crown, and retires to a monastery.

Sim. Dunelm. Bede.

An.Ch.757. Osulph, who was assassinated by his own family in the very first year of his reign.

Mollo is  
murdered by  
Alcred, and  
his son  
Ethelred  
compelled to  
abandon his  
dominions.

Sim. Du-  
nelm.  
Hovend.

An.Ch.765.

The regal power now devolved to Mollo-Ethelwald, altho' he was not of the blood royal, and his election was productive of calamities, which ended in the ruin of the kingdom; for no sooner did the Northumbrians disregard the royal family in the choice of their king, than every powerful nobleman thought himself as well intitled to the throne as another, and began to cabal for the sovereign power: this ambitious contention gave rise to dangerous factions, which at first convulsed and afterwards destroyed the liberty of the nation. Among these aspiring pretenders was Oswin, who excited a rebellion in support of his pretensions; but his adherents were routed, and he himself lost his life in the engagement which happened at Eldune near Melrofs: but in three years after this battle Mollo fell by the treachery of Alcred, who took possession of his throne. Yet this traitor did not long enjoy the fruits of his usurpation; for, the party of the deceased king prevailing over his interest, he fled for refuge to the British court; and Ethelred son of Mollo was set upon his father's throne. This prince, in order to secure his authority, by the destruction of that faction which had supported his predecessor, made use of very slender pretences for putting to death three principal noblemen who had opposed his election; and this violence, far from answering his expectation, served only to forward the machinations of his enemies, by furnishing them with a plausible pretext for revolting. They forthwith took the field, and obtained two successive victories over the forces of the king, who was obliged to quit his throne and take shelter in one of the neighbouring kingdoms; while the victorious faction bestowed his crown upon Alfwold,



Alfwold, son of Ofulph, and grandfon of Egbert. An.Ch.765.  
 The new king did not enjoy his fortune without disturbance; for, in the second year of his reign, an infurrection was raised by Osbald and Ethelheard, two noblemen, who routed Bearne his general, and pursued him to a place called Saletune, where he was burnt to death. Aa.Ch.778. Nevertheless, he Sim. Du-nelm. found means to quell this rebellion, and governed the kingdom eleven years with great equity and moderation, which however could not secure him against the treacherous attempts of the opposite party, by whom he was basely assassinated, and his place supplied by Ofred, son of Alcred. An.Ch.789.

This weak prince brought himself into such contempt with his subjects, that in the very first year of his reign, they confined him to a monastery; and recalled Ethelred, after he had wandered about twelve years in exile. Is recalled, and reigns with cruelty and despotic power.

He no sooner re-ascended the throne, than he began again to exhibit proofs of his cruel and vindictive disposition. He seduced with fair promises Oelf and Oelfin, sons of Alfwold, from the principal church of York, in which they had taken sanctuary, and then ordered them to be assassinated at Worewaldremere, a village in Lancashire. The next object of his barbarous revenge was the unhappy Ofred, who had escaped from the monastery to the isle of Man, from whence he was now decoyed by the professions of two treacherous noblemen employed for that purpose, and put to death by the command of the inhuman Ethelred, who, in order to strengthen his interest, married Elffled daughter of Offa the Mercian king. This was a prince of his own character, who had invited Ethelbert king of the East Angles to his court, where, at the instigation of his wife, he caused him to be put to death, and immediately seized upon his kingdom.

Mat. West.

An.Ch.789.

The Danes  
make a de-  
scend in  
Northum-  
berland.

During the reign of Ethelred, the Danes made a descent upon Northumberland, where they burned the monastery of Lindisfarne. Allured by the rich booty which they obtained at that place, they returned in the course of the following year, and landed at the mouth of the Tyne, plundered the monastery of Tinmouth, founded by king Egfrid; but, Ethelred, with the assistance of his father-in-law Offa, repulsed them to their vessels; and they were afterwards overtaken by a terrible tempest, in which they perished on the English coast.

Ethelred is  
assassinated.

Sim. Du-  
nelm.  
Hovend.  
Alcuin.  
Epist.  
Malmesb.

Ethelred still giving way to his jealousy and revenge, continued to devise means for compassing the death or exile of his most formidable subjects; and at length ventured to banish Ardulph, one of the first noblemen of the kingdom; an act of violence that produced an open rebellion and civil war which raged two years, with various success, until the revolvers, tired of such a tedious process, had recourse to the expedient of assassination, which freed them from the tyranny of Ethelred, but could not prevent the crown's falling into the hands of Osbald, who had been a staunch adherent of the deceased king. Charlemagne was so much incensed at the murder of Ethelred, for whom he professed a friendship, that he had well nigh declared war against the Northumbrians, who nevertheless found means to deprecate his wrath.

An.Ch.796.

Ardulph is  
expelled by  
his own  
subjects.

Osbald did not long enjoy his new dignity; for, in less than a month after his elevation, he was expelled by the opposite party, and the sovereign power vested in Ardulph; though the kingdom was so distracted by two factions, that he could not expect to reign longer than his party should continue to preponderate. The opposition was headed by Alcmund son of Alcred, who had once occupied the throne; and this young prince became so formidable by his popularity, that Ardulph thought

It necessary to sacrifice him to his own safety. His death occasioned an open insurrection, countenanced and conducted by a nobleman called Aldrick, who being vanquished and slain, the kingdom enjoyed a little respite. But the malecontents increased daily to such a degree both in number and power, that Ardulph thought himself happy in accomplishing his escape from his own dominions, and took refuge in the court of Charlemagne, where the English always met with a favourable reception. After his retreat, the throne was seized by Erswold, who conducted the opposite faction; and he was succeeded by Eandred, in whose reign Northumberland submitted to Egbert king of Wessex, who put an end to the Saxon Heptarchy.

An.Ch.796.

An.Ch.840.

## Of the kingdom of EAST ANGLIA.

The kingdom, founded by the Angles that landed on the eastern coast of England in separate and independent bodies, was bounded on the north by the Humber and German ocean, which likewise environed it on the east; it lay contiguous to the kingdom of Essex on the south, and to Mercia on the west. It extended eighty miles in length, five and fifty in breadth, contained the provinces of Norfolk and Suffolk, with part of Cambridgeshire; and its chief towns were Norwich, Thetford, Ely, and Cambridge.

Founded by  
Uffa.

Uffa, the survivor of all the twelve chiefs, under whom the East Angles arrived in England, assumed the title of king, and was succeeded by his son Titel, whose reign was as obscure as that of his father: but his son and successor Redwald became the most illustrious monarch of the whole Heptarchy, of which he was chosen the head. As we have already recorded his actions in the history of

Redwald's  
great character.

**An.Ch.624.** of Northumberland, we shall only observe that his son Erpwald, to whom his crown devolved, was a prince of so contemptible a character, and degenerated so much from the virtues of his father, that he was despised by his own subjects, and suffered himself to be directed in every thing by Edwin king of Northumberland, who, in all probability, would have deprived him of his kingdom, had not he been restrained by the ties of gratitude which he owed his father Redwald. Erpwald in the latter end of his reign embraced the doctrines of the christian religion: and his conversion seems to have given offence to great part of his subjects; for, he was soon after assassinated by one Richbert, a pagan, who, though he did not assume the title of king, exercised the chief authority for three years, and then the East Angles raised to the throne Sigibert, uterine brother of their late monarch, who had retired into France in consequence of Redwald's jealousy, and there been converted to the christian religion.

Erpwald is  
assassinated,  
Bede, l. ii.  
**An.Ch.633.**

Sigibert re-  
tires to a  
convent, and  
is afterwards  
slain in a  
battle with  
Penda.

Malmesb.  
l. i.  
Bede, l. iii.

When he had fixed himself securely in possession of the throne, he employed his chief care in propagating the gospel among his people, and having met with extraordinary success in that pious work, by means of a Burgundian priest called Felix, he retired into a monastery, leaving his crown to his kinsman Egric, who had not long enjoyed the crown, when his dominions were attacked by Penda the Mercian king; and his subjects having very little confidence in his capacity, intreated Sigibert to quit his retirement and take the command of their forces. He yielded at length to their importunities; and refusing to wield any other weapon than a small wand, accompanied Egric into the field, where the East Angles were defeated, and both princes lost their lives.

The



## SAXON HEPTARCHY.

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The crown devolved to Annas, nephew of Redwald, who became one of the most celebrated kings of East Anglia, and re-established Ceanwalch in the kingdom of Wesssex, of which he had been deprived by Penda, who was so exasperated on this occasion, that he resolved to ravage East Anglia with fire and sword. Annas mean while began to take the necessary measures for his own defence; but died in the midst of his preparations; and was succeeded by his brother Ethelric, who found himself in no condition to support a war against such a formidable enemy. He therefore bought a peace from Penda with a considerable sum of money; and even joined him in his invasion of Northumberland, where they were vanquished and slain by Oswy, as we have already related. The throne was supplied by his brother Ethelwald, the particulars of whose reign are unknown; and his successor was Ardulph, the son of Ethelbert, of whose reign we know nothing more than that he assisted at the council of Hatfield.

The next East Anglian king was Alphwald; and at his death the kingdom was divided between Beorna and Ethelbert, who reigned together in peace and obscurity. Beorna survived his colleague, and was succeeded by Ethelred, who left his crown to his son Ethelbert, a virtuous prince, who, as we have already observed, fell a sacrifice to the treachery of Offa the Mercian king; and from this period East Anglia and Mercia were united.

An.Ch.654.  
Ethelric purchases a peace.

Ann. Sax.

Floreleg.  
M. Westm.

An.Ch.792.

East Anglia is united to Mercia.

### Of the kingdom of MERCIA.

The kingdom of Mercia was separated from Northumberland by the river Humber, and extended westerly to the Severn; it was parted by the Thames on the south from the kingdoms of Kent, Suffex, and Wesssex; and bounded on the east by Effex

Founded by  
Crida.

An.Ch. 584. **Essex and East Anglia.** The extent of it amounted to about one hundred and sixty miles, and its greatest breadth to an hundred. The principal towns were Lincoln, Nottingham, Warwick, Leicester, Coventry, Litchfield, Northampton, Worcester, Gloucester, Derby, Chester, Shrewsbury, Stafford, Oxford, and Bristol; in a word, it was the fairest and most considerable of all the kingdoms that composed the Saxon Heptarchy, and owed its origin to Crida, who died in the first or second year of his reign.

At his death it was seized by Ethelbert king of Kent, and chief of the Saxon confederacy, who afterwards restored it to Wibba son of Crida, as we

An.Ch. 625. have seen in the history of Kent.

The turbulence of Penda.

This prince, after a reign of nineteen years, left the kingdom to his son Penda, whom Ethelbert prevented from succeeding immediately, by giving the crown to Cearlus or Cheorl, cousin-german to the late king, whose reign of nine years is marked by no transaction of consequence. As he died without issue, the crown devolved upon Penda, already in the fiftieth year of his age, and it was not without reason he had been set aside by Ethelbert; for, he was the most turbulent prince of his time, as the reader must have already perceived in the detail we have given of his wars with the other kingdoms of the Heptarchy. We shall only observe upon this occasion, that his disposition seems to have been cruel, from his propensity to war, the dreadful ravages he committed, and the torrents of blood which he shed. He occasioned the death of five christian kings, and seems to have despised that religion; though we do not find that he prohibited the exercise of it in his dominions, or took the least offence at the conduct of his son Peada, who married the daughter of Oswy king of Nor-

Northumberland, embraced the christian religion, and brought a great number of missionaries into Mercia, where they preached the gospel with great success.

An. Ch. 625.

Bede, l. iii.

We have already related the manner in which he lost his life in the eightieth year of his age, leaving five sons, namely, Peada, Wolpher, Ethelred, Merowald, and Mercelin; besides two daughters called Cineburga and Ciniswintha.

After his defeat and death, Oswy the conqueror made himself master of the kingdom of Mercia, which he kept three years, permitting, however, his son-in-law Peada to enjoy the little kingdom of Leicester, which his father had erected into a sovereignty; but, this unhappy prince being afterwards poisoned by his own wife, her father Oswy took possession of his principality, and retained it in his hands, together with the rest of the Mercian kingdom, until it was wrested from him by the gallantry of Wolpher. The reign of this king was almost as tempestuous as that of his father: for, he was continually at war with his neighbours, though his enterprizes did not always succeed. Certain it is he reduced the isle of Wight, and afterwards bestowed it in a present upon Aldewach, king of Suffex, whom he had made a prisoner, and converted to the christian religion. In all probability he subdued the king of Effex, inasmuch as we know he disposed of the bishopric of London in favour of Wina. We have already related how he fought the battle with Eskuin, king of Wessex; and all that remains to be said of this prince, is, that after a reign of hurry and action, he bequeathed the crown to his son Kenrid, but he was supplanted by his uncle Ethelred.

Wolpher  
subdues the  
isle of  
Wight.

William of  
Malmesbury.

Ethelred de-  
feats Egfrid  
king of  
Northum-  
berland,

This prince having successfully usurped his nephew's kingdom, dismembered it of Hereford, which he erected into an independent sovereignty,

in

**An.Ch.625.** in favour of his brother Merowald, who dying without issue, left it to his youngest brother; and when he died childless, it reverted to the kingdom of Mercia. As for Ethelred, he was a prince of a warlike genius, though not so ambitious as his father and brother. His first exploit was in the kingdom of Kent, which he ravaged without opposition. Then he turned his arms against Egfrid, king of Northumberland, whom he defeated in battle, and compelled to give up Lindsey, which had been wrested from his predecessor. At last a peace was concluded between those two princes, **An.Ch.679.** through the mediation of Theodore, archbishop of Canterbury, and Ethelred paid a sum of money to the Northumbrian king, in consideration of the death of his brother Eskuin, who was slain in the battle.

**Bede, l. iv.**  
**Malmesb.**  
**l. iii.**

**Ethelred's**  
**queen**  
**Ostrikthe af-**  
**faſſinated.**

About this period, the ſtates of Mercia, with their king's conſent, divided their country into the five dioceses of Worceſter, Litchfield, Leiceſter, Linſey or Cednaceſter, and Hereford: and Ethelred ſeemed to enjoy the tranquillity of his ſituation; when his queen Oſtrithe was aſſaſinated by the northern Mercians, who hated her becauſe ſhe was ſiſter to the king of Northumberland; but her huſband was not exempted from the ſuſpicion of being acceſſary to the murder, becauſe he took no ſteps to diſcover and puniſh the aſſaſſins. Whether his conſcience upbraided him as the perpetrator or contriver of this barbarous action; or his mind was really captivated by the pleaſures of private devotion, he reſigned his crown to his nephew Kenrid, and became a monk in the monaſtery of Bardney, of which he was afterwards abbot.

**Malmesb.**  
**l. i.**

**An.Ch.704.**

**His ſucceſſor**  
**Kenrid fol-**  
**lows his ex-**  
**ample.**

Kenrid, having reigned four years, followed the example of his predecessor, and that of Offa, king of Eſſex, who had come to his court to demand in marriage his aunt Ciniswintha. This princeſs, inſtead



stead of complying with this proposal, persuaded her nephew and lover to renounce the vanity of the world and go to Rome, where they received the frock and tonsure from his holiness. An.Ch.709.

Kenrid was succeeded on the throne by his kinsman Ceolred, a prince of greater talents and activity, who supported a severe war against Ina, king of Wessex, with whom he fought a bloody battle at Woodensburg, in Wiltshire, in which neither side could claim the victory, though both sustained great damage. Ceolred, far from imitating the devotion of his predecessors, treated the monks with infinite contempt, and even violated some privileges of the clergy; no wonder then that his character was aspersed, and his life treacherously taken away by poison; the effects of which were so violent, that he died in a delirium, which supplied the honest monks with a pretence to say, he gave up the ghost, blaspheming and conversing with the devil. Ceolred of a different character.

An.Ch.716.

Epist. Bonif.

Ethelbald, a prince of great power, is slain in a sedition.

He was succeeded by Ethelbald, grandson of Eoppa, who was Penda's brother. This was one of the most illustrious princes who reigned in Mercia, and was chosen chief of the Saxon confederacy, after Ina king of Wessex had abdicated his crown. But his ambition increased with his power, and he seemed to consider that as an absolute sovereignty, which was no other than a privilege of presiding at general assemblies, and of commanding the united forces of the Anglo-Saxons, whenever they should take the field against the common enemy. Ethelbald, in assuming an authority to which he had no claim, incurred the jealousy and hatred of the other Saxon princes, and the kings of Wessex and Northumberland engaged in a league to humble his insolence. Ethelbald being apprised of their alliance and intention, assembled his forces, and invaded Northumberland, from whence he returned loaded with plunder. In the mean time his own dominions

were

**An.Ch.716.** were attacked by Ethelhard, king of Wesssex, who had already routed a body of his troops commanded by his son Oswald; so that he advanced in order to check the progress of this intruder, who was obliged to retreat to his own country, and afterwards took Somerton in Somersetshire. He prosecuted other wars with the rest of the Saxon princes, and defeated the Britons in conjunction with Cuthred, king of Wesssex, by whom he himself was routed in the sequel. At last he lost his life in a sedition of his army, excited by a nobleman called Beornred, who was proclaimed king by the mutinous soldiers.

**Ann. Sax.**  
**Hunting.**  
**M. Westm.**

**An.Ch.757.** Such tumultuary proceedings gave great offence to the Mercian nobles, who, before Beornred had time to secure himself in his usurpation, elected Offa, nephew to the late king, an active prince, who assembled an army immediately, and gave battle to the usurper, over whom he obtained a complete victory. Having established himself securely on the throne, he glowed with the ambition of rendering his name famous for military exploits, and marched into Kent, whose king Aldric he vanquished and slew with his own hand at Otford. The next conquest he achieved was that of the Hastings, who were either a remnant of the Britons still unconquered, or a tribe of some other nation settled in the place where the Normans afterwards landed with William the Conqueror.

**Vit. Off. ad**  
**Calmuth.**  
**Par.**

He was in the sequel engaged in war with Almun another king of Kent, whom he reduced to obedience. He gained the advantage over Kinewulph, king of the West Saxons, near Bensington or Benson, which fell into his hands. He invaded and ravaged Northumberland; and his success alarmed all the princes of the Heptarchy, who began to take measures for their own preservation. The Britons, taking the opportunity of these

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diffensions, made sudden inroads upon the English, which as they were unexpected, were successful. Offa, in whose territories they had gained some footing, compromised matters with the Saxon princes; then turning his arms against those invaders, not only compelled them to abandon the conquests they had made in Mercia, but even drove them out of part of their own country on the other side of the Severne, and settled it with English colonies, for whose defence he raised a strong rampart, provided with a deep ditch, extending eighty thousand paces, from the mouth of the river Dee to the confluence of the Wye and the Severne.

An.Ch.757.

Annotat. in  
Cambden.

After this expedition he associated his son Egfrid into the administration, and bestowed his daughter Elburga in marriage upon Brithric king of Wessex; he likewise defeated a body of Danes, who had made a descent upon the coast; and acquired a reputation for policy and war, equal to that of any monarch who had as yet presided over the Saxon Heptarchy. But all his glory was tarnished by the murder of Ethelbert king of East Anglia, whom he had invited to his court on pretence of making him his son-in-law; and there, at the instigation of his wife Quindrida, assassinated the unhappy prince, in violation of the most sacred rights of hospitality. An execrable crime which he had no sooner perpetrated, than he seized upon the dominions of the murdered prince: so that his guilt was enhanced by the most sordid and infamous aggravation.

He is accessory to the murder of Ethelbert king of East Anglia.

Brompton.

He afterwards pretended to feel such compunction and remorse, that he could enjoy no repose, until he should receive indulgence from the pope in person; he therefore made a journey to Rome, and was absolved of the guilt, on condition of becoming a benefactor to monasteries and churches; an effectual atonement for the worst of crimes:

An.Ch.792.  
He makes a journey to Rome.

N<sup>o</sup>. 5.

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but,

An.Ch. 792. but, in all probability his penitence was not sincere; because he did not make restitution of the kingdom he had so wickedly usurped. Among his other liberalities to the church of Rome, he extended the tax of Romefcot over all Mercia and East Anglia; so that the alms originally intended for the support of the English college was now converted into a tribute for the pope's use: because it was payed on the festival of St. Peter ad Vincula, it acquired the name of Peter's Pence; and was constantly levied, to the disgrace of this nation, until Henry VIII. abolished the shameful imposition.

Carries on a  
correspon-  
dence with  
Charle-  
magne.

Offa, before he left Rome, prevailed upon the pope to canonize St. Alban, whose body was said, to be found at Verolam, where the king at his return built a magnificent church and monastery; and from this circumstance the place derived the name of St. Alban's, which it still retains. He likewise made large donations to the church of Hereford, in a reign of nine and thirty years, which was signalized by a great number of remarkable transactions, namely, the Welsh dyke, the union of East Anglia and Mercia, the erection of Litchfield into an archbishopric, the establishment of Peter's Pence in three and twenty counties, a body of laws, which he published under the title of Mercius Leaga, and a correspondence which he maintained with Charlemagne.

G. Malmesb.  
l. i.  
Lambert.  
Sax. leg.  
Spelman  
Concil.  
Kenulf's  
cruelty to  
Egbert-Pren  
king of  
Kent.

Offa had already crowned his son Egfrid as his associate in the government: but that prince did not survive him above five months; and at his death the crown devolved to Kenulf, descended by a collateral branch from Wibba. He no sooner ascended the throne than he assembled an army and marched against Egbert-Pren king of Kent though the cause of the quarrel is unknown; and not only defeated and took that prince prisoner but even ordered his eyes to be put out, and placed another



## SAXON HEPTARCHY.

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another king upon his throne, which was thus rendered dependent upon the Mercian sovereign. Kenulf died, after a glorious reign of four and twenty years, leaving a young son named Kenelm, and two daughters called Quindrida and Burgamida.

An.Ch.796.

The eldest of these, infected with the desire of reigning, employed a wretch, whose name was Ascobert, to assassinate her brother; and this ruffian, having executed her baleful purpose, threw the body into a well, where it was found by accident: but the traitress did not reap the expected fruits of this abominable crime; for the Mercians supplied the vacant throne with the last king's uncle Keolwulph, who in less than a year after his elevation, was deposed by Bernulph, one of the most powerful noblemen in the kingdom: he was succeeded by Ludican, with whom we shall close this account of the Mercian kings.

Kenelm murdered by the machinations of his sister.

An. Saxon.  
An.Ch.823d

### Of the kingdom of ESSEX.

The kingdom of Essex or East Saxons, was bounded on the north by East Anglia; on the east by the German ocean; on the south by the Thames; and on the west by the kingdom of Mercia; extending seventy-five miles in length, and thirty-eight at its greatest breadth. It comprehended Essex, Middlesex, and part of Hertfordshire; and its chief towns were London and Colchester. This country was erected into a kingdom by Ercenwin; but historians are silent with respect to the particulars of its first foundation, by which the successors of Hengist lost a country in all respects as considerable as the kingdom of Kent.

The kingdom of Essex founded by Ercenwin.

An.Ch.527.

Ercenwin's reign was protracted to sixty years; but the particular transactions are not recorded. His son Sledda succeeded him on the throne;

An.Ch.599.  
Sibert converted to christianity.

An.Ch. 599. which devolved at his decease upon his son Sibert, who was converted to the christian religion, partly by the preaching of Melitus, and partly by the solicitation of his own uncle Ethelbert \* king of Kent. . He afterwards signalized himself for his piety; and at his decease the crown became the joint property of his three sons, Saxred, Siward, and Sigebert: those princes renounced the christian religion in which they had been educated, and rashly engaged in an unequal fight with Cinegils and Quinchelm kings of Wesssex, by whom they were vanquished and slain.

Bede, l. i.  
M. West.

An.Ch. 623. The sovereign authority was then vested in Sigebert the Little, son of Siward, of whom we know nothing but that he lived and died: but his successor was Sigebert the Good, descended from a brother of the pious king Sebba. He re-established the christian religion in the kingdom of Essex, with the assistance of Cedd, a Northumbrian priest, who was consecrated bishop of the East Saxons. Sigebert was assassinated by two of his own relations, who were exasperated against him, because he would not take vengeance upon Cedd, for having dishonoured one of them with the sentence of excommunication †.

G. Malmes.  
l. i.

An.Ch. 653. He was succeeded by his brother Swithelm, of Sebba turns monk. whose reign we can find no detail: but at his death the crown was possessed conjunctly by Sebba and

\* During this prince's reign Ethelbert, in consequence of his being chief of the confederacy, exercised a supremacy in his nephew's dominions, by building the church of St. Paul, in London, on the foundation of an old temple of Diana. It was consecrated by Melitus, who was the first bishop. Sibert himself afterwards built another church on the spot, where a temple of Apollo had once stood, in the isle of Thorney; now St. Peter's

at Westminster.

† This nobleman was excommunicated for fornication, notwithstanding which the king went to partake of a banquet at his house, and upon his return he was met by Cedd, who, after having upbraided him with his complaisance to such a reprobate, pronounced his doom; and the prediction was literally fulfilled, in all probability, by the express direction of the good prelate.

Walsingham

Bede, l. i.  
Sigebert

Siger, the sons of Siward and Sigebert the Little. An.Ch.653.  
 This last \* relapsed into idolatry, but his colleague continued firmly attached to the christian religion; they were both vassals of Wolpher king of Mercia; and Sebba surviving his associate, reigned eleven years by himself, and then turned † monk in his old age; leaving his crown to his sons Sighard and Senofrid, who reigned together in peace and harmony, and died as they had lived together, at least the one survived the other but a very little time.

Then the crown devolved to Offa the son of Siger, who repairing to the court of Kenrid king of Mercia, in order to demand Ciniswintha in marriage, that princess, (as we have already observed) persuaded him and her own nephew to embrace a monastic life. Offa's successor was Seolred, son of Sigebert the Good, who reigned eight and thirty years; and then being murdered, tho' we know not the cause or circumstances of his death, was succeeded by his son Swithred, the last king of Essex whose name is mentioned in history. An.Ch.694.  
Hen. Hunt.  
l. iv.  
An.Ch.709.

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## OF THE CHURCH.

WE have seen Augustin arrive in England as a simple monk and missionary: but, he had no sooner converted Ethelbert, and acquired an unbounded influence with that monarch, than he began to assume all the pomp and authority of a patriarchal metropolitan, or apostle of the English nation. He was indeed consecrated as such at Arles, Augustin receives the pall from the pop

\* The cause of his apostacy was mortality among his people, in revenge for which he restored the heathen rites.

† In St. Paul's in London, where his coffin remained so late as the reign of James I.

to which he made a voyage for that purpose ; and at his return to Britain he sent Laurentius, with a monk called Peter, to make the pope acquainted with the success of his labours, and desire his opinion and direction touching certain points relating to the behaviour of the bishops and clergy. His holiness having considered and replied to the questions, which with their answers may be seen in Bede's history of the church, sent over Melitus, Paulus Justus, Melinus, and Rufianus, to assist him in converting the Saxons ; at the same time he transmitted directions about erecting sees among the new converts, and a pall for Augustin, which is an undyed piece of woollen cloth, laid upon St. Peter's tomb by the pope's own hand, and worn over the shoulders by metropolitans when they officiate. Augustin was likewise permitted by his master to convert the pagan temples into christian churches, after due purification, and to institute anniversary festivals of saints and consecrations, upon which the good people should build booths around those places of worship, kill oxen, eat, drink, and be merry with moderation. A very singular indulgence, judiciously granted to the English, who were used to good cheer, and would not have at first relished the practice of fasting and other mortifications.

He endeavours to bring the British clergy within the pale of the church of Rome.

As for Ethelbert, he was become so zealous a convert that he bequeathed his own palace to the church, and retired to Reculver, that Augustin might be more at his ease in Canterbury. Notwithstanding all these favours, and the princely magnificence in which he lived, this pious apostle could enjoy no content while the British clergy lived independent of his authority, and unsubjected to the see of Rome.

He employed all his art and industry to found and soothe their prelates into a conformity with the Roman



Roman church; and at last they consented to a conference, which was held at a place since called Augustin's Ac, in Worcestershire, where they found his behaviour so arrogant, his pretensions so high, and his merit so small, that they rejected his proposal, of giving up their independency, even tho' he confirmed the claim of the Roman church by miraculously restoring to sight a Saxon convert of his own tutoring, who in all probability was not blind. That they might not, however, incur the charge of obstinacy, they desired another conference, resolving to deliberate upon an affair of such consequence; and Augustin agreeing to the proposal, they consulted a venerable hermit, who told them that they might look upon Augustin as a man of God, if he was of a meek and lowly spirit, and behaved with that humility which ought to distinguish the followers of Christ. Persuaded that this was the real criterion of true holiness, they, by the advice of this sage counsellor, delayed appearing at the place of appointment, until they knew he was arrived; and then entering, they were received with all the state and haughtiness of a Roman emperor. He did not even rise from his seat at their approach; but insisted in a peremptory manner, that they should keep the festival of Easter, and administer the sacrament of baptism, after the manner of the Roman church. Far from being convinced by his arguments, and assured by his insolence that his call was not from above, they steadfastly persisted in refusing to conform with the Romish church, and to pay any other obedience to the bishop of Rome, than that which one christian owes to another in meekness and charity: at the same time they declared that the administration and supremacy of their church was, under God, vested in the bishop of Kaerleon. Augustin, incensed at this declaration, threatened, since they refused to

Bede, 1. ii.  
c. 2.

Spelman.

live in unity with him and his brethren, that they should be delivered into the hands of their enemies; and in all likelihood executed his menaces, by instigating the king of Northumberland to destroy their seminary, and put them all to the sword, as we have seen in the history of that kingdom.

The people  
relapse into  
idolatry.

Augustin did not long survive this ineffectual effort, but before his death he consecrated his fellow-missionaries Melitus and Justus, the first of whom was ordained bishop of London, and the other promoted to the see of Rochester: but, after the death of Ethelbert and Sibert, the people apostatized and expelled these reverend prelates, who fled to France for refuge from pagan persecution.

Laurentius, who succeeded to the see of Canterbury, seemed to inherit the pride and bigotry of his predecessor, and still laboured to subject the British church to the tyranny of Rome; but when the son of Ethelbert and some other Saxon princes relapsed into idolatry, he began to think of making his retreat, and would certainly have crossed the sea, had not he found means, by a ridiculous contrivance\*, to reconvert his king Eadbald, who afterwards restored the fugitive prelates. He was succeeded by Melitus, a prelate of noble extraction and eminent piety; and his successor was Justus of Rochester, who was empowered by pope Boniface V. to consecrate bishops.

An. Ch. 619. It was at this period that Paulinus converted the court of Northumberland, and laboured so success-

\* He spent a whole night in the church of Canterbury; and in the morning going to the king, stripped off his cloaths, and shewed his back and shoulders bloody from the stripes he had received. When Eadbald demanded with equal surprize and indignation, who had presumed to treat a person of his character in that un-

worthy manner, he replied that St. Peter had appeared in the night, and scourged him severely for his having harboured the thought of deserting his flock in the midst of their distress. The simple king believed the good man's relation, and forthwith returned into the pale of the church.

fully

fully in the vineyard, that the inhabitants of Deira and Bernicia where baptized by thousands in the river Swale. He likewise, by the assistance of one James a deacon, met with surprising success among the Mercians, whom he baptized in the river Trent; and his fame extending as far as Rome, the pope honoured him with a pall as archbishop of York, and sent another to Honorius, who had succeeded Justus in the see of Canterbury. Upon the death of Edwin, who had been the great patron of Paulinus, that prelate thought proper to retire to Kent, where he settled in the see of Rochester; while his colleague James the deacon remained in the North, notwithstanding the paganism of the Northumbrian king, and prosecuted his evangelical labour without flinching.

Paulinus  
converts the  
Northum-  
brians.

The West-Saxons were converted to christianity, by Berinus, who was invested by the pope with the episcopal dignity for that purpose, independent of Augustin and his coadjutors. The Mercians were not so soon gathered into the fold of Christ, as we have observed in the history of this kingdom. The merit of converting the South-Saxons is ascribed to Wilfred, after his expulsion from the see of York; and though he is said to have confirmed his doctrine by miracles, his great success seems to have been owing to the favourable disposition of Adelwalch, who had already embraced the christian faith, and to the great influence Wilfred acquired among the common people, by teaching them to fish with nets for their subsistence, during a scarcity of corn. Having thus given a short sketch of the manner in which the different nations of the Saxons embraced the doctrines of Christianity, we shall now exhibit to the reader a short abstract of church-history.

The West-  
Saxons con-  
verted by  
Berinus.

Bede, l. iv.

The archbishops of Canterbury not only endeavoured to extend their jurisdiction over the British

Theodore is  
promoted to  
the see of  
Canterbury.

tish church, but also to reduce the Scottish clergy to the dominion of the pope. Theodore, a Greek, having been promoted to the see of Canterbury, held a synod at Harford, where, among other particulars in the book of canons, to be diligently observed, he insisted upon their keeping Easter according to the literal direction, on the Sunday after the fourteenth day of the moon in the first month. This was a stroke aimed at the Britons and Scots, who celebrated that festival by another rule; and two bishops from Icolm-kill had prevailed upon the Northumbrians to adopt their usage in this respect, though they had been converted by Roman missionaries. Oswy, king of that country, considering the difference as a subject of great importance, proposed a conference at Whitby in Yorkshire, between Colman, one of the Scottish prelates, supported by several monks of his nation, and Wilfred, who had already brought over the queen to his opinion. The dispute was of consequence decided in favour of this courtly abbot: while Colman and his party renounced their preferment and retired to Scotland\*.

A dispute  
between  
Wilfred and  
Colman.

Bede, l. iv.

The delicacy  
of Sebba.

We have observed, that Sebba king of the East Angles, became a monk under the direction of Walder bishop of London. During his retirement he expended a large sum of money in pious uses, and was of such delicacy of disposition, that finding his last hour approaching, he desired that no person should be allowed to see him die but the

\* In the synod held at Harford, and composed of Theodore archbishop of Canterbury, Bisi bishop of the East-Angles, Wilfred bishop of the Northumbrians, Putta bishop of Rochester, Lutherius bishop of the West-Saxons, and Winfred bishop of the Mercians; regulations were made touching the behaviour of bishops and monks, the

nature of divorces, and the holding of a synod once a year at Cloveshoe, supposed to be Abington in Berks: but no dispute was more eagerly maintained between the Romish and the British clergy than that of the ecclesiastical tonsure, which the first directed to be made so as to resemble the crown of thorns that Christ wore,

bishop



bishop and two of his own domestics, lest he should in his last agonies betray the weakness of human nature; but he preserved the dignity of his character to the last, and expired without a groan or convulsion.

Lutherius, bishop of the West Saxons, dying about this period, his place was filled with Heddi, consecrated by Theodore, who exerted his authority even to the deposition of bishops, in the case of Winfred bishop of the Mercians, whom he removed from his see, appointing Sexwulf as his successor. To this prelate Putta bishop of Rochester fled for shelter, when Kent was invaded by Ethelred; and being hospitably received, employed his time in teaching church-music. During the reign of Egfrid in Northumberland, Wilfred archbishop of York had acquired such influence over the mind of the queen, that her husband had recourse to his mediation, by which he hoped to overcome a fanatical delicacy in that princess, that deprived him of the conjugal rites. Wilfred, instead of arguing her out of this ridiculous scruple, seems to have applauded her conduct; for, she received the veil from his hands, and retired into a monastery, from whence she afterwards fled to Ely from the importunities of her husband.

Wilfred's  
influence  
with the  
queen of  
Northum-  
berland.

Her inflexible obstinacy cured Egfrid of his passion; and he married Ermenburga, a princess of a very different complexion, who confirmed the king in his resentment against Wilfred, whom he was resolved to humble for his arrogance and presumption: but the power and interest of this prelate was so great, that he would not venture to attack him openly, until he had effected a rupture between Wilfred and Theodore, who, at Egfrid's request, erected several new bishoprics in the diocese of York, without the consent of the bishop. Wilfred, enraged at this innovation, exclaimed bitterly against the

His see of  
York is dis-  
membered.

He himself  
imprisoned  
and expelled.

the metropolitan and the king, and demanded the revenues which had been converted to the maintenance of the new prelates. The king insisted upon the rectitude and legality of the steps he had taken, and Wilfred appealed to the decision of Rome, whither he went in person, and presented a servile petition to the pope, and council assembled for the purpose. In return for the gross incense he offered to pope Agatho, he obtained a decree for being reinstated in his bishopric, on pain of excommunication to all those who should oppose his restoration. Wilfred immediately returned to England, in full confidence of recovering all that he had lost. When he delivered his credentials to Egfrid, that prince summoned a general council of the clergy and laity, who asserted their independence of Rome; and Egfrid, finding himself supported by the opinion of his subjects, sent Wilfred to prison, where he lay a whole year, until his release was obtained by the intercession of the abbess Ebba, a lady of the royal family. But, this favour being granted on condition that he should immediately quit the kingdom, he retired to Mercia, from whence he was driven by king Ethelred, who dreaded the displeasure of the Northumbrian monarch. He was also obliged to leave the country of the West Saxons; and then took up his habitation among the South Saxons, where as we have formerly observed, he acquired great influence and power.

Bede. Hist.  
Eccles.

Perhaps it was in consequence of his success, that Theodore invited him to a conference, in which all differences were compromised, and the archbishop of Canterbury wrote a letter in his favour, to Alfrid the successor of Egfrid, by whom he was restored to the see of York, and put in possession of the monastery at Rippon. Not contented with such indulgence, he insisted upon Hexham's being reunited

united to his diocese, and the restitution of such revenues of St. Peter's at York, as had been secularized by the king. These arrogant demands embroiled him with Alfrid, who expelled him once more from his bishopric; and about this period An. Ch. 690. Theodore archbishop of Canterbury died, in the eighty-eighth year of his age, after having governed the church, as a metropolitan independent of the Roman see, to whose decision he paid no respect in the affair of Wilfred. He was a prelate of learning and piety: and this nation was obliged to him for an excellent library of Greek and Latin books which he imported, as well as for the pains he took in educating the sons of the noblemen and other persons of distinction.

By this time Wilfred had retired into Mercia, His influence. and enjoyed the bishopric of Leicester. While he there resided, Bithwald, now archbishop of Canterbury, summoned him to a council at Onestresfield, where being convicted of several misdemeanours, he was degraded from his function, though permitted to enjoy the revenues of the monastery at Rippon. From this sentence he appealed to Rome; a circumstance so highly resented by the English synod, to which he had behaved with great arrogance, that he was punished with the sentence of excommunication.

Though now turned of seventy, he made another journey to Rome, where he was again acquitted in full synod, and furnished with letters of recommendation to the kings of Mercia and Northumberland. Ethelred payed some regard to these credentials, but Alfrid refused to hold any commerce with a person who had been twice condemned by an English synod. After the death of this prince, he endeavoured to introduce himself under the reign of Eadwulf, who rejected his proposals and expelled him from his dominions. Nevertheless, He makes a second journey to Rome. he

he had by this time retrieved his interest in that kingdom to such a degree, that immediately after the revolution which ensued, he found himself as much favoured by the new ministry as he had been detested by the former king.

He is created  
bishop of  
Hexham.

Bede, l. ii.

The archbishop of Canterbury thinking it was now high time to accommodate matters with a priest of such interest and aspiring ambition, convoked a council near the river Nid, now in Scotland; and there it was decreed that John bishop of Hexham should be translated to the see of York, vacant by the death of Bosa; and that Wilfred should not only succeed to the bishopric of Hexham, but also enjoy the revenues of the abbey at Rippon. Thus the dominion of the Romish see was confirmed in the triumph of Wilfred, who survived this accommodation about four years, and died in the seventy sixth year of his age.

A synod at  
Alne.

In the course of the same year there was a synod at Alne, convoked at the instance of Egwin bishop of Worcester, who by a grant from the pope had built a monastery at Evesham, the privileges of which were confirmed by this council. This is the prelate who is said to have been the occasion of introducing image-worship into England, by a vision of the virgin Mary, who commanded him to set up her image in his cathedral. But, the charters brought in support of this assertion have been clearly convicted of imposture; and it appears from the letter of pope Gregory to Serenus, bishop of Marseilles, as well as from the declaration of the venerable Bede, that pictures were permitted in churches for the instruction of the ignorant vulgar, in those early ages of the church; but they never were the objects of adoration.

The power  
of the Ro-  
mish see  
gains ground  
in England.

From the council of Nid, however, the Roman power continued to gain ground every day in the British church. Aldhelm bishop of Sherborn

wrote



wrote a book against the British manner of celebrating Easter; a performance which made a number of proselytes; and one Egbert an Englishman persuaded the monks of Jona, one of the western isles of Scotland, to adopt the Romish Easter, and receive the tonsure of that church.

The next ecclesiastical transaction of moment, is the famous charter of Ina, exempting the monks of Glaffenbury from all episcopal jurisdiction. It was signed by that monarch and his queen Edilburga, Berthwald archbishop of Canterbury, and many other prelates of note; nay, it was afterwards said to be confirmed by the pope. But, notwithstanding all these testimonies, it is now considered as an imposture; and indeed has been detected as a flagrant piece of forgery, contrived by the monks in after ages.

Stillington.  
Antiq.

Berthwald archbishop of Canterbury dying, after he had possessed that see for seven and thirty years, was succeeded by Tatwin, a Mercian monk, who exercised all his metropolitan functions three years before he received the pall from Rome: and about this period, ends the ecclesiastical history of the venerable Bede, who was born in the bishopric of Durham, and studied in the monastery of Jarrow, where he acquired such reputation for learning, that the reigning pope desired his superior to send him to Rome, that he might consult with him upon several points of ecclesiastical discipline.

Some account of  
Bede.

Baron. An.  
l. v.

By this time a great profligacy of manners had crept into the English church, and proceeded to such a degree of degeneracy, that a provincial synod was called at Cloveshoo, in which all the Mercian bishops assisted, though the Northumbrian prelates do not appear to have been present. Here a body of excellent canons was compiled, for the reformation of abuses, the restoration of discipline, and the punctual performance of the pastoral function. At this

Synod at  
Cloveshoo.

Spel. Conc.

this council Cuthbert archbishop of Canterbury presided; and it was even dignified with the presence of Ethelbald king of the Mercians, who had just amended his profligate life, and was become a munificent benefactor to the church, in consequence of a severe exhortatory letter he had received from Boniface archbishop of Mentz. After having finished the monastery of Croyland, he granted general privileges to all the monastic societies in his kingdom; and upon these grants and charters, the voluntary donations of devout princes, are founded the arguments used by the advocates for the independency of ecclesiastical power; though those very deeds declare they were no other than charitable concessions.

Lambart  
elected arch-  
bishop of  
York;  
Litchfield  
erected into  
an arch-  
bishopric.

The see of Canterbury was, at the death of Cuthbert, filled with Bridwin, a noble Saxon of remarkable piety and discretion, who did not survive his promotion above three years. His body was demanded by Lambart, at the head of a party of soldiers, that it might be buried in the monastery of St. Augustin, according to the privilege of that order: but finding it already interred in Christ's-church, he appealed to the pope for satisfaction. The monks of Christ's-church, alarmed at this appeal, fell upon an effectual expedient to disarm him of his indignation, by electing him archbishop; and he soon after received the pall from pope Paul V. This prelate exerted all his interest and industry to prevent Offa king of the Mercians from erecting an archiepiscopal see within his dominions, by which his own metropolitanical power would be dismembered: but pope Adrian, to whom the dispute was referred, decided in favour of Offa, whom he empowered to erect Litchfield into an archbishopric, to which all the Mercian bishops were declared suffragans.

G. Malm.  
de Gest.  
Pont. l. i.

A synod in  
Northum-  
berland.

This was the last blow given to the independency of the British church; for, it fixed Offa and his new elected archbishop Adulph in the interest of Rome, which was so sensible of the great influence it had gained by this compliance with Offa's ambition, that the pope sent Gregory bishop of Ostia, and another prelate, whose name was Theophylact, in quality of legates to England. These came on pretence of reforming the discipline of the English church, and executing the partition of the metropolitanical power of Canterbury.

A synod was accordingly held in Northumberland, and gave assent to all the articles which had been already prepared by the legates: these were in effect little more than a confirmation of canons, which had formerly received the sanction of the church; excepting however two new articles, one of which is an admonition to kings to respect the clergy, and the other a caution to the people against choosing illegitimate sovereigns. The decrees of this synod were afterwards confirmed by another council convened at Calcluith, which was more frequent and full than the other; and Adulph received the pall from Rome, without Lambart's daring to murmur, for fear of being impeached of unreasonable practices. Notwithstanding this partition of the archbishopric of Canterbury, it afterwards retrieved the dioceses which had been dismembered from it, and Litchfield again became a suffragan.

Spelman's  
Conc.

Offa, having exerted himself so much in favour of the church, was considered in other countries as a very religious prince, and received from Charlemagne the decrees of the second council of Nice, commending image-worship, against which the famous Alcuin, who was an Englishman and tutor to Charlemagne, had writ with great energy and warning: indeed his performance had a remarkable

Offa receives  
the decrees  
of the second  
council of  
Nice from  
Charle-  
magne.

able effect among the Germans; for image-worship was solemnly condemned in a synod at Franckfort.

Athelard  
recovers the  
dioceses of  
which the  
see of Can-  
terbury had  
been dis-  
membered.

Lambart was succeeded in the archbishopric of Canterbury by Athelard, who had been bishop of Winchester; a man of learning and influence among the nobility, who had well nigh prevailed upon Egfer, son and successor of Offa, to restore the see of Canterbury to its former power and prerogatives, when that prince was taken off by an untimely death. He carried his point, however, in the succeeding reign of Kenulf, who, being willing to deliver himself from the power of a metropolitan, lent an ear to the remonstrances of Athelard, and even recommended his cause to the pope in a submissive letter, which the archbishop delivered with his own hand. His request was granted, and he obtained a restitution of all that had been dismembered from his see: while Adulf was, at the intercession of Alcuin, allowed to preserve the pall, though deprived of the power of consecrating bishops, or exercising any function of a metropolitan.

G. Malmes.  
de Gest.  
Pont.

Council at  
Cloveshoo.

Athelard having recovered the prerogatives of his see, convoked a council at Cloveshoo, in which this transaction was confirmed in the presence of Kenulf: and afterwards another synod was held in the same place, in which the severest ecclesiastical censures were denounced against any prince who should make such violations for the future; and any archbishop who would consent to them: at the same time, it was decreed that no layman should take upon him the government of a monastery, and that no society of monks should choose a layman for their chief.

Account of  
Alcuin.

The succeeding year was distinguished by the death of Alcuin, who was a priest of extensive learning and the most amiable character. Be-

So



Scots and Northumbrians claimed the honour of having produced this great man, who was sent by Offa as ambassador to Charlemagne, and retained about the person of that emperor, whose disposition he softened into an affection for the arts of peace. It was by Alcuin's persuasion he bridled his lust of power and conquest, and encouraged the liberal arts, by founding the universities of Paris and Pavia, to which he invited scholars of all nations, but particularly those of England and Scotland.

Rog. de  
Hoved,  
G. Malmes,  
Synod at  
Calcuith,

The next synod was held at Calcuith, where Athelard's successor Wulfrid presided; and the decrees which there passed, dispensed with the relics of martyrs at the consecration of churches; prohibited the Scots who travelled into England, from exercising any sacerdotal function: confirmed all grants and decrees signed with the mark of the archbishops, by princes and others who could not write, and obliged the bishops to record the transactions of their dioceses.

The same archbishop held another synod at Cloveshoo, in presence of Beornulf king of the Mercians; and the temporal power of the kingdom assembled to determine a difference between the abbess Quendrida, daughter of Kenulf king of Mercia, and the archbishop, by which the whole nation had been six years deprived of the sacrament of baptism: Kenulf had quarrelled with Wulfrid about the manor of Leonesham, which the prelate at length consented to give up, on condition of his being restored, by the king's intercession, to his metropolitan rights, of which he had been deprived by the pope: otherwise he should be possessed of his lands again. Kenulf died before he could perform his part of the agreement, and his daughter the abbess occupied the lands that were now claimed by the archbishop. So that the synod was principally called to compromise the difference,

Difference  
between  
Wulfrid  
archbishop  
of Canter-  
bury and the  
abbess  
Quendrida,

though the archbishop was obliged to go to Rome before the interdict could be removed.

Dispute between the bishop of Worcester and the monks of Berkley.

Spelman's Conc.

We find afterwards another synod held in the same place to determine some disputes which had arisen between Herbert bishop of Worcester, and the monks of Berkley. The cause was decided by oath, and the lands in question were adjudged to the bishop; but the temporal as well as spiritual powers agreed to the charter of confirmation.

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## E G B E R T,

The First King of ENGLAND.

WE have already observed, that the pacific An.Ch.800.  
 Brithric was no sooner dead, than the West- Egbert  
 Saxons sent a deputation to Egbert; in consequence ascends the  
 of which, he returned and mounted the throne of throne of  
 Wessex, and began to reign over a people both Wessex, and  
 rich and powerful, in whose affluence and affection is chosen  
 he foresaw his own future greatness. He had, in chief of the  
 all probability, already planned the union of the Saxon con-  
 Heptarchy; but before he would impart the least federacy.  
 hint of that design to the other Saxon nations, he  
 resolved to humble the Britons in such a manner,  
 that they should be in no condition to interfere with  
 the execution of his grand project. Mean while,  
 in order to avert the suspicion of the Saxons, he  
 acted as mediator in all the differences subsisting  
 between the princes of the Heptarchy, and in par-  
 ticular effected a reconciliation between Eardulf,  
 king of Northumberland, and Kenulf, king of  
 Mercia, who had taken the field against each other,  
 and were on the eve of terminating their quarrel by  
 the sword.

These good offices, employed with such mode-  
 ration, the prudence he manifested in his own govern-  
 ment, and his known capacity in the affairs of war  
 and peace, raised his character to such a degree of  
 reputation, that he was considered as the father of  
 the English kings, and chosen chief of the Saxon  
 Heptarchy.

Having thus established himself in the good He defeats  
 opinion of his countrymen, he assembled an army, the Britons.  
 and marched against the Britons of Cornwall, whom M. West.  
An.Ch. 821

An. Ch. 823. he defeated in a bloody battle fought at Camelford, as well as in many other encounters: he likewise reduced Exeter, and subdued the whole country. The rapidity of his success alarming Beornulf, king of Mercia, whose dominions lay contiguous to his conquests, that prince took the opportunity of his absence to invade his kingdom; confiding, perhaps, in an alliance he had formed with the Britons, against the dangerous power and ambition of Egbert.

Obtains a  
signal victory  
over Beornulf king  
of Mercia.

This enterprising monarch was not sorry to hear that the Mercian king had furnished him with an handle to recover the provinces which Offa had wrested from the West-Saxons, and even to break the power of that kingdom, which was the chief obstacle to the execution of his vast designs: he therefore advanced against Beornulf, who met him at Ellandine, now Wilton, with a numerous army composed of lusty young men, who looked with contempt upon the diminutive meagre followers of the West-Saxon monarch. A battle immediately ensued, and was fought for a long time with doubtful success; but at last the conduct and discipline of Egbert prevailed, and the Mercians were defeated with terrible slaughter.

Camden.

Subdues  
Kent, and  
receives the  
submission  
of the East  
Saxons.

Chron. Sax.  
ad An. 823.

The victor, instead of pursuing Beornulf immediately into his own country, detached his son Ethelwulf, Alstan bishop of Sherborn, and Wulfheard, one of his ealdermen, with a body of troops into Kent, the people of which paid a very unwilling obedience to Baldred, whom they considered as no more than the Mercian deputy. And indeed that prince justified their contempt of his administration, by flying to the other side of the Thames without having made any opposition to the invaders, whom he left in full possession of the kingdom. The East-Saxons and part of Surry belonging to them, or to the Mercian monarch, dissatisfied

with

with the nature of their subjection to a people by whom they were oppressed, readily submitted to Egbert; and the East-Angles sent ambassadors to crave his protection and assistance against that nation, whose yoke they resolved no longer to bear. An. Ch. 823.

Beornulf, instead of running the risque of another overthrow from Egbert, marched to the other extremity of his dominions, in order to quell this revolt of the East-Angles, by whom he was defeated and slain: though the Mercians, even in this emergency, would not give up the kingdom of East-Anglia, which had been acquired by perfidy and murder; but, laying aside their intestine animosities, united in conferring the sovereign power upon a kinsman of their late king, called Luduan, who, having collected a body of forces, advanced to take vengeance on the rebellious East-Angles, and met with the fate of his predecessor. The Mercians are routed by the East Anglians,

The Mercians not yet totally humbled by the successive calamities which had befallen them, still refused to submit to the dominion of Egbert, but raised to the throne one Withlaf their eolderman, who could not withstand the victorious arms of the West-Saxon monarch, but was driven from province to province, and at last obliged to conceal himself in the abbey of Croyland; while Egbert made himself master of the whole Mercian kingdom. His misfortunes, however, excited the compassion of the conqueror, who in the course of the succeeding year restored him to the government; which, nevertheless, he held as a vassal and tributary. Thus Egbert's humanity and interest happened to coincide; for the Mercians bore their subjection the more easily, as they were still indulged with that form of government to which they had been so long attached; and ruled by a prince of their own choosing, who was a man of some parts and great popularity. and their kingdom subjected by Egbert. An. Ch. 827.

An. Ch. 827.

Northum-  
berland sub-  
mits to his  
sway, and he  
is crowned  
king of  
Britain.

Egbert, having thus provided for the tranquillity of Mercia, was at leisure to prosecute his war with the Britons, who were unable to oppose such a general at the head of a veteran army, inured to conquest, especially as they were weakened by their own intestine divisions, particularly the war between Conan Tindaethwy prince of Guyneth, and his younger brother Howel, who claimed Anglesey as his share of their father's inheritance †. Egbert, therefore, over-ran the whole country without opposition; so that he now saw himself, either by conquest or voluntary submission, master of all the kingdoms on the south side of the Humber, and resolved to extend his dominion on the north side of that river. The Northumbrian kingdom had been for a long time distressed by civil wars and usurpation, which had destroyed all order, and weakened the kingdom to such a degree, that they were in no condition to withstand such an invader as Egbert, to whom they submitted when he had penetrated with his army as far as Dore in Yorkshire. By this submission all the seven provinces of the Heptarchy were united under his government; yet, in order to give a stronger sanction to his power, he summoned a general council of the clergy as well as laity at Winchester, where he was solemnly crowned king of Britain; and this ceremony was no sooner performed than he issued an edict for abolishing all distinctions among the Saxon kingdoms, and commanding that the united Heptarchy should be thenceforward known by the common appellation of England.

G. Malmes.  
An. Sax.

He had now attained to the summit of glory; and saw the whole extent of South Britain subjected to his sway, and all the people enjoying in peace

† The custom of Gavel-kind still prevailed among the Britons, by which though the eldest succeeded to the ho-

nours of the father, all the rest claimed equal shares of the inheritance.



the fruits of his prudent administration. But this tranquillity was soon interrupted by the descent of the Danes, who had already made some considerable attempts upon different parts of the kingdom. They were a people composed of different nations, inhabiting the countries of Jutland, Sweden, Denmark, and Norway, though they used the same language, customs, and heathenish rites ; and were prompted to undertake naval expeditions, by the plenty of wood and other necessaries for ship-building, which their country produced, the poverty of the soil, the redundancy of their numbers, and the example of the Saxons, with whom they seem to have had one common origin ; for, they nearly resembled that race in the ceremonies of their superstition, the make of their bodies, their insensibility of danger, their enterprising courage, their savageness of manners, their familiarity with the sea, their rapine, and cruelty of disposition. That there was, at least, a mixture of Saxons among them, appears from the testimony of the most authentic historians, who tell us, that a great number of Saxon pagans fled before the arms of Charlemagne into Jutland and other northern countries, where they settled, and in all probability first taught the natives to build ships, and gather the harvest of a pyratrical navigation. This conjecture is justified by their constant practice, during a series of years, of confining their ravages and depredations to the sea-coasts of that emperor's dominions.

We have already taken notice of their landing in small numbers, at different parts of this island, in quest of plunder ; but those were inconsiderable attempts, in comparison with their invasions during the reign of Egbert. As the Saxons had utterly neglected their naval power since they settled in Britain, the Danes, who succeeded them in the empire of the sea, found no difficulty in landing upon

Egbert is  
worsted by  
them at  
Charmouth.

An.Ch.829. the isle of Sheppey in Kent, which they ravaged, and returned to their ships laden with plunder, without having sustained the least interruption. This success encouraged them to try their fortune next year at the mouth of the Tyne, where, having received a small check, they hoisted sail, and cruising along the coast, made a descent at Charmouth in Dorsetshire, where they landed to the number of fifteen thousand men. Egbert was no sooner apprised of their appearance than he marched against them at the head of a small body of troops, which he thought sufficient to chastise a band of pilfering pyrates; but, notwithstanding the impetuosity of his attack, by which they were at first disordered, they gave him such a warm reception, that he might have been entirely defeated, had not the approach of night prevented the completion of their victory, and enabled him to retire unmolested, after having lost a great number of men, and among others two principal officers called Dudda and Oimund, with the bishops Herefrith and Wigen. The Danes were so roughly handled, that notwithstanding the little advantage they had gained, they retreated to their ships, without attempting to pillage the country.

Chron. Sax.

Obtains a complete victory over them at Hengsdown hill.

Yet far from being deterred from renewing hostilities, they, within two years after this adventure, equipped a great naval armament, and landed in Cornwall, where being joined by the Britons, they advanced towards the borders of Devonshire, with a view to penetrate into the territories of Egbert, who gave them battle at Hengsdown hill near Kellingington, where they were totally routed, and almost their whole united army cut in pieces. By this great victory he entirely wiped off the slight stain which had stuck to his reputation since the action at Charmouth, and death soon put his fame beyond the reach of fortune; for he died in full

glory

## ETHELWULF.

235

glory, after having reigned six and thirty years, with such ability and success as justly intitled him to the rank of a consummate politician and accomplished hero, An.Ch.835.

## ETHELWULF.

EGbert was succeeded by his son Ethelwulf, who had been educated in a cloister, and actually taken orders, during the life of his elder brother; but, that prince dying, pope Leo granted him a dispensation to quit the monkish habit, and marry. After having been thus secularized, he had given signal proofs of personal courage in his father's expeditions against the Danes; but he still retained an indolence of spirit, and an inclination for the repose of a monastic retreat. This, however, he could not expect to enjoy upon a throne, especially at a juncture when he was kept in continual alarms by the Danes, a bold, valiant, and indefatigable enemy.

He is succeeded by Ethelwulf, who had taken deacon's orders.

In the very first year of his reign a body of those enterprising pyrates arrived at Southampton, in three and thirty ships; they had scarce begun to ravage the country, when they were attacked and routed by Wulfheart, one of Ethelwulf's best generals, who died immediately after his success. Nay, before the troops could be dismissed, intelligence was brought that the Danes had made a descent at Portland, whither the army was ordered, under the command of Edelhelm, who attacked the invaders with great intrepidity, and at first disordered their battalions; but they rallied, and returned to the charge with such fury, that the English were routed and their general slain.

The Danes defeat the English general at Portland.

Chron. Sax.

In the course of the succeeding year, they landed at Romney, and defeated Herebert, an eolderman, who

They take London, Rochester, and Canterbury.

An.Ch.838. who was sent to oppose their progress; then penetrating farther into the country, they wasted Lindsey, East-Anglia, and Kent, with great barbarity; and next year London, Canterbury, and Rochester, met with the same fate. Upon these occasions, their sole design was to obtain plunder, and they were generally opposed by the militia of the country in which they landed; so that they seldom or never found themselves under the necessity of withstanding the whole united force of the realm, as they always re-embarked with the spoil before the people whom they pillaged could be properly sustained.

An.Ch.840.

They defeat  
Ethelwulf at  
Charmouth.

At length, however, they resolved to make a settlement in the fertile plains of England, and arrived in a very considerable number at Charmouth, where Egbert had formerly been worsted. The landing of such a numerous body could not fail to alarm the indolent Ethelwulf; and the steps they immediately took for securing a settlement, effectually roused him from his lethargy. He assembled his forces without delay, and advanced in person against those interlopers; but, as if the spot had been unfortunately omenous to his family, he was, after a very obstinate engagement, obliged to leave the enemy in possession of the field, though, even at this time, they did not think proper to maintain the footing they had gained\*.

An, Sax.

Berthulf

\* It was about that period, (if we may believe the Scottish historians) that the difference began between the Scots and Picts, which terminated in the extirpation of the Pictish nation. This people had routed the Scots under their king Alpin, and treated the dead body of that prince with great indignity. A circumstance which exasperated his son and successor Kenneth to such a degree, that his kingdom had no sooner recovered the

loss they had sustained in the last battle, than he marched against the enemy, where, reinforced with a body of Northumbrians, and having obtained a complete victory, he ordered all the men able to carry arms to be put to the sword, and the rest to be expelled the kingdom. Such a total extirpation reflects very little honour on the memory of Kenneth, and the account of it has all the air of a romance. That the Picts were utterly

subdued,



Berthulf, who had succeeded his brother With-  
laf in the tributary kingdom of Mercia, quarrelled  
with the Britons whom he engaged in a pitched  
battle at Ketell on the frontiers of both kingdoms,  
where Mervyne Vrych the British king was slain.  
Nevertheless, the war continued for some time, the  
Britons being supported by the Danes, and the  
Mercians reinforced by Ethelwulf, who, finding his  
dominions incessantly exposed to the ravages of those  
restless barbarians, eased himself of part of his care,  
in bestowing the kingdoms of the East and South  
Saxons, with that of Kent, upon his son Athel-  
stan.

An. Ch. 840.

He bestows  
the king-  
dom of  
Kent, Es-  
sex, and  
Suffex, upon  
his son A-  
thelstan.

Affer. vit.  
Alfrid.

This was a judicious step for securing the  
southern coast; but the Danes met with much less  
resistance in Northumberland, which was torn by  
domestic divisions. Ethelred had been deposed by  
his own subjects, and succeeded by Redwald, who,  
soon after his accession to the throne, lost his life  
in a battle with those invaders, fought at a place  
called Calvethley; so that the king was restored  
to his authority, and losing his life in another en-  
gagement with the Danes, Oswald ascended the  
throne, and was assassinated by his own subjects,

The Danes  
pillage Nor-  
thumber-  
land.

subdued, and their kingdom seized by  
the victor, is not to be disputed; but  
that they were not utterly extermi-  
nated, or even wholly united with the  
Scots, so as to lose their name and  
language, appears from the silence of  
the English historians, who would  
not have failed to take notice of the  
entire destruction of such an ancient  
and warlike people; besides, Asserius  
Menevensis, who, as we are told by  
Mr. Innes, lived near this period, far  
from mentioning this event, says the  
Picts were harassed by the Danes in  
the year eight hundred and seventy-  
five; nay, Ethelred, in his chronicle,  
and his cotemporary Ingulphus, af-

firm that the Picts constituted part of  
the army of Constantine king of Al-  
bany at the battle of Brunford, against  
Athelstan king of the Saxons, in the  
year nine hundred and thirty-seven.  
The Picts are mentioned as a people  
in Galloway, and the western parts of  
Scotland, about the year eleven hun-  
dred and twenty-two, in a letter from  
Radulph archbishop of Canterbury to  
pope Calixtus; and Richard prior of  
Hexham inform us, as an eye-wit-  
ness, that the Picts made part of king  
David's army at the battle of the Stan-  
dard, in the year eleven hundred and  
thirty-seven.

or

An.Ch.840. or rather by the faction which never acknowledged his authority. These unhappy divisions not only exhausted the strength of the kingdom, but also assured a cordial reception to the Danes as oft as they thought proper to land; for they were always joined by the weaker party.

They are defeated by count Ceorl at land, and by Athelstan at sea,

While Northumberland lay open to their descents and inroads, the other parts of the kingdom enjoyed some repose, till at length, having exhausted and impoverished the unhappy country, they steered their course for the coast of Wessex, where they landed, and ravaged the adjacent country; but, in returning to their ships, with great store of plunder, they were charged at Wenebury by the troops of Ethelwulf, commanded by count

An.Ch.851. Ceorl, and entirely routed. Encouraged by this victory, the young king Athelstan equipped a fleet, and attacking them by sea near Sandwich, defeated them on their own element, and took nine of their ships, which he brought safe into the harbour. Yet, notwithstanding all his activity, he could not hinder another body of the same nation from taking up their winter-quarters in the isle of Sheppey.

They enter the river Thames, plunder London, and penetrate into Mercia.

Not at all discouraged by the frequent checks they had received, they returned in the spring with a fleet of three hundred sail, which entered the river Thames so unexpectedly, that the two kings were in no condition to oppose such a formidable invasion; and while they were employed in assembling an army able to face such a number in the field, the Danes took London and Canterbury, penetrated into Mercia, where they routed the troops of Berthulf, who attempted to stop their career; and proceeded with such rapidity that they seemed to bid fair for making a conquest of the whole island.

But, they were at length obliged to desist from their enterprize, in consequence of having received  
advice

advice that Ethelwulf and Athelstan had taken the field with a strong army, in order to cut off their retreat. These two princes were encamped at Okely in Surry; and thither the Danes directed their march, committing terrible cruelties in their route, which were soon retorted upon them with interest by the English, who defeated them in battle, and made such carnage that few or none of them escaped. Yet even this overthrow did not dispirit that ferocious people, who made their winter-quarters good in the isle of Thanet, by means of the continual supplies they received from their own country.

An.Ch.853.

They sustain a terrible overthrow at Okely in Surry.

An.Ch.853.

M. Weft. Roger de Hovend.

As for Athelstan, no mention is made of him after this period; so that one would imagine he had lost his life in the battle of Okely: certain it is, Berthulf king of Mercia died before the expiration of that year, and was succeeded by Birthred, with the consent of Ethelwulf, who not only bestowed one of his own daughters in marriage upon that prince, but likewise assisted him in his wars with the Welsh, who were at last obliged to submit to the terms he was pleased to impose.

An. Sax.

The battle of Okely, though it did not deter the Danes from renewing their descents, at least supplied Ethelwulf with leisure and opportunity to indulge his natural inclination for the conversation of monks, and the duties or rather bigotry of devotion. His confidence was shared between two prelates of very different characters: these were Swithin bishop of Winchester, and Alstan bishop of Sherburn. The first by soothing his natural indolence, endeavoured to detach him from the vanities of the world, and discoursed of nothing but the joys of paradise; while the other animated him by proper incentives, to support the glory of his family, and take measures to secure his realms against invasion: thus they ruled the heart of the king

Ethelwulf is wholly governed by two bishops.

An.Ch.853. king by turns. When the Danes alarmed the country, he was directed by the councils of Alstan; but, in time of peace, he gave himself wholly up to the suggestions of Swithin, who inspired him with such veneration for the church and the clergy, that his munificence to both degenerated into the most excessive profusion.

He sends  
his son Al-  
fred to  
Rome, and  
afterwards  
goes thither  
in person.

In order to manifest his devotion to the pope, he sent his son Alfred, then a boy just turned of five, to receive confirmation from the hands of his holiness, who is said to have anointed him as a chosen vessel, and prognosticated his future greatness; and not satisfied with this testimony of his zeal, he undertook a journey in person to Rome, where he was received with particular marks of distinction by pope Leo IV. and in his return gave that pontiff the most substantial proofs of his submission and regard. He rebuilt the English college, which had been reduced to ashes; engaged to extend the Romescot or St. Peter's pence over his whole kingdom, and saddled himself besides with a yearly tribute of three hundred marks, two thirds of which were appropriated for defraying the expence of tapers for the churches of St. Peter and St. Paul; and the remainder for the pope's own private occasions.

Affer. Mi-  
nev.

Marries the  
daughter of  
Charles the  
Bald king of  
France.

Having, exclusive of these grants, which have afforded a pretext to some authors to affirm he had rendered his kingdom tributary to the see of Rome, made very magnificent presents in gold and silver to the churches, bishops, and clergy, and visited every particular shrine, and adored every individual relic at Rome, he departed from that city on his return to England, and resided for some time at the court of Charles the Bald, king of France, whose daughter he married in the thirteenth year of her age; a very impolitic step in a prince who had several children by a former marriage.

An.Ch.855.  
An. Sax.

While



A conspiracy is formed against him, in which his son Ethelbald is the principal.

While Ethelwulf thus imprudently gratified the dictates of his superstition and love, he seemed wholly to neglect the interest of his kingdom, which he had left exposed to the insults of a rapacious enemy, without even appointing a regency to govern the state in his absence. The Surrymen and inhabitants of Kent, commanded by Alcher and Huda, attempted to drive the Danes from the isle of Thanet, where they had made a kind of settlement: and in that hope attacked them with great intrepidity; but the victory, after a very bloody engagement, declared for the Danes, and the two English noblemen lost their lives in the battle. After this advantage the Danes became more and more dangerous and enterprising; and bishop Alstan fearing the nation would be ruined by the indolence, mismanagement, and mad superstition of a weak monarch, who had already given away a tythe of all the lands to the clergy; Alstan, I say, being moved by these considerations, and, in all probability, piqued at the ascendancy which his rival had gained over Ethelwulf, engaged, together with Eanwulf, earl of Somerset, in a conspiracy with the king's son Ethelbald, who had been a malcontent since the death of his elder brother Athelstan, because he did not succeed that prince on the throne of Kent. Thus prepared with disgust and ambition, he was easily persuaded to adopt the measures proposed by Alstan, who represented that the old king was in his dotage, and the kingdom was left naked to invasion; that Ethelbald was injured and dishonoured, in being denied the succession of his brother; and that, in all probability, should this new marriage produce any children, they would be preferred to the issue of the first marriage, in complaisance to a young wife, and the power and interest of her father. These suggestions not only reconciled Ethelbald to the expediency of preventing his father's return, but

An.Ch.855. likewise had a great weight among the nobility and people; so that a strong faction was formed before Ethelwulf had the least intimation of their design.

He returns to Britain, and compromises the difference with his son.

He was no sooner apprised of this conspiracy than he quitted the court of France, and arrived with his young wife in England, before the conspirators could take measures for preventing his return. Nevertheless, Ethelbald openly maintained his rebellion, for which he found a new pretence, in his father's bestowing the title and dignity of queen upon his young consort, contrary to the law which had been made by the West Saxons upon Birth-ric's being poisoned by his wife. Every thing now seemed to threaten a civil war, when some of the principal noblemen and prelates, foreseeing that such intestine commotions would expose them to inevitable ruin, threatened as they were by invaders, interposed their good offices, and effected an accommodation, in consequence of which Ethelwulf ceded to his son Ethelbald the antient kingdom of Wesssex; reserving to himself the kingdom of Kent, comprehending the provinces of Essex and Suffex.

Affer. Me-  
nev.  
G. Malmes.

He makes his will, dies, and is succeeded by his sons Ethelbald and Ethelbert.

G. Malmes.

Ethelwulf, during the two years that he survived this reconciliation, employed his time in works of charity and devotion; and finding his end approaching, settled by will the succession of his dominions. Those that he himself possessed were bequeathed to his second son Ethelbert, and failing him, to Ethelred, and afterwards to Alfred, in default of their male issue; what other provision he made for these two young princes, we do not find in any historian, but he ordained that all his successors should maintain one poor person for every ten families within their own particular domains. Having made these dispositions, he died in peace, and was succeeded by Ethelbald, in Wesssex; and Ethelbert, in Kent.

ETHEL

# ETHELBALD and ETHELBERT.

**E**thelbald gave a loose to all manner of debauchery, - and is even said to have married his father's wife; though it is likewise added, that he was reclaimed by the admonitions of the bishop of Winchester, made atonement for his vices, by benefactions to the church, and died a penitent, about two years after the decease of his father. His crown devolved to his brother Ethelbert, a virtuous prince, whose reign was disturbed by no cabals or civil commotion; though immediately after the decease of Ethelbald, the Danes landed at Southampton, and penetrated as far as Winchester, the capital of Wesssex, which they plundered and burned, before their progress was stopped by Osric and Ethelwulf, the English generals, who repulsed them to their ships with extraordinary courage; and those pirates flying for refuge to the isle of Thanet, were permitted to live in quiet upon that district, in consideration of a sum of money to be paid to the Kentishmen. Ethelbert died after a reign of six years, during which he had acquired the affection of his subjects; and though he left two sons, called Adhelm and Ethelward, his younger brother Ethelred inherited his dominions by virtue of the father's will.

The Danes  
plunder  
Winchester;  
An. Ch. 857.

An. Sax.

# ETHELRED I.

**T**HIS prince had no sooner ascended the throne, than refusing to part with a share of his dominions to his brother Alfred, in consequence of a previous agreement between them during the life of Ethelbert; this last being then in the seventeenth year of his age, demanded performance of the contract, in presence of all the English nobility assembled.

A difference  
between  
Ethelred  
and Alfred  
accommodated.

An.Ch.875. assembled at Swinburne, where a new convention was ratified, stipulating that Alfred should succeed to the whole kingdom at Ethelred's death, and in the mean time possess certain domains for his subsistence, and be intitled to a share of all the lands that should be conquered by their joint forces. After this accommodation the two brothers always acted in concert against the common enemy, who were now become so formidable, that nothing but the most perfect union could withstand the power of their invasion.

Osbert  
raised to the  
throne of  
Northum-  
berland.

The authority which Egbert had reserved over the kingdoms of Mercia, East-Anglia, and Northumberland, had been lately much diminished by the intrusion of those savage pirates, which obliged the kings of Wessex to concentrate their whole power for the defence of their own dominions; so that those three kingdoms began to withdraw themselves by little and little from the supremacy of Egbert's successors. The Northumbrians, as being the most remote, shook off their dependence entirely, and suppressing their former animosities, elevated Osbert to the throne, with the universal approbation of the people. By this union the kingdom would soon have been rendered as flourishing as ever, had not an unforeseen accident revived their former dissensions, and involved them in a gulf of confusion and calamity, from which they could not be extricated.

He ravishes  
the wife of  
Bruen-Bro-  
card, who  
excites an  
insurrection  
against him  
among the  
Bernicians,  
and they  
choose Ella  
for their  
king.

Osbert, who kept his court at York, returning one day from the chase, chanced to stop for refreshment at the house of a nobleman, called Bruen-Bocard, superintendant of the sea-coast, who being absent upon duty, the king was entertained by his lady, a woman of extraordinary beauty and accomplishments, which instantly captivated the heart of the monarch. But her virtue being equal to her other attractions, she received his addresses with disdain; and he, instigated by a brutal violence of desire,



desire, subjected her by force to his wishes. The husband was no sooner informed of this outrage upon his honour, committed against all the ties of gratitude and hospitality, than he devoted his whole attention to the study of revenge; and being a person of influence in the kingdom, excited such a spirit of resentment against the ravisher, that the Bernicians actually revolted, and placed Ella upon the throne; so that the civil war between the two provinces was renewed, and the country involved in all the miseries of faction. Indeed the parties were so equally matched, that neither side durst venture to hazard a decisive blow, while each prince maintained a separate sovereignty.

Bruen-Bocard thinking his vengeance still incomplete, resolved to call in a foreign power to make the scale preponderate against Osbert; and for that purpose undertook a voyage to Denmark, which was then governed by a king called Ivar. To this monarch he described the weakness of Northumberland, and proposed the conquest of that kingdom as an enterprize which he himself would facilitate to the utmost of his power; and Ivar eagerly embraced a proposal, in the execution of which he foresaw such advantage, and so fair an opportunity to gratify his private revenge against the English, among whom his father had been basely murdered, at the court of \* Edmund, king

Bruen Bocard calls in the Danes to complete his vengeance.

\* Edmund, king of East-Anglia, was the son of Alcmund, an East-Anglian prince of the blood-royal, who had retired into Germany when Offa took possession of the kingdom. Edmund had returned to England, and been promoted to the crown of East-Anglia, at the death of Ethelwulf, in all probability with the consent of Ethelbald. Lothbroch, king of Denmark, is said to have visited this prince, and to have been murdered by the huntsman of the

Saxon king, without the privity of his master, to whom however the sons of the Danish monarch imputed the crime. In all probability Edmund was innocent, as there seems to have been no provocation, and he is represented by historians as a meek religious prince. Matthew of Westminster alledges, that the huntsman assassinated Lothbroch, because he had superseded his influence with Edmund.

An, Ch. 857. of the East-Angles. He therefore embraced the count's offers without hesitation: and having equipped a powerful armament during the winter, set sail in the spring, accompanied by his brother Ubba, and Bruen-Bocard, who undertook to be conductor of the expedition.

They ravage Northumberland, defeat and kill Osbert and Ella; the first in the neighbourhood of York, and the other at Ellescroft.

Brompton.  
Sim. Duple.  
An. Ch. 863.

Meurs.  
Hist. Dan.

They entered the river Humber, and landing without opposition, made themselves masters of the whole country lying to the northward of that river: then they directed their march towards the capital, where Osbert was employed in making preparations for taking the field against him. He had, upon the first notice of their arrival, sent deputies to Ella, desiring that their private quarrel might be suspended, and their forces joined against the common enemy; and Ella had agreed to this proposition, from a regard to his own safety. He began therefore to assemble his troops in defence of his rival. If Osbert had but kept himself within the walls of York, the Danes would have been obliged to divide their forces; and in all probability their enterprize would have miscarried: but that prince giving way to the impetuosity of his temper, led forth his troops without waiting for Ella, and charged the Danes with such fury, that they could scarce sustain the shock: however, summoning all their fortitude, they stood without flinching, until the ardour of the Saxons was abated; and then attacking in their turn, obtained a complete victory, Osbert himself being slain, with many thousands of his followers. The Danes after the battle entered York without further opposition; but understanding that Ella was advancing against them, at the head of a fresh army, Ivar marched out to meet him, and a second engagement ensued, as obstinate as the first, and as fatal to the Northumbrian, who there lost his life, and gave the name of Ellescroft to the scene of his misfortune.

The

They penetrate into Mercia, plunder the monasteries and commit terrible outrages.

Affer. In. gulf. Flor. Wighorn.

Ivar invades East-Anglia, and orders king Edmund to be shot to death with arrows.

The victorious Ivar met with no more opposition in Northumberland, which he entirely subdued; but not satisfied with this conquest, he penetrated into Mercia, ravaging and wasting the country in his route, until his career was checked by the appearance of king Buthred's army, which by this time his brother-in-law Ethelred had strengthened with a powerful reinforcement. The Danish prince was startled at the formidable appearance of the Saxons, whom he would not venture immediately to attack; and Buthred dreading the issue of a battle on which his all depended, took the opportunity of this pause, to offer a sum of money, on condition the enemy would quit his dominions: the terms were embraced by Ivar, who returned to Northumberland, and in his march plundered all the convents and monasteries, to which the people had conveyed their most valuable effects. Not was the mischief they did confined to the effects of their rapaciousness; for they burned the towns and villages, ravished the women, and murdered the people, without distinction of age or sex, from mere wantonness of barbarity\*.

Ivar leaving his brother Ubba in Northumberland, embarked on board of his ships with a body of choice troops, and made a descent in the kingdom of East Anglia, where Edmund advancing against him, was defeated, and took sanctuary in a church, from whence he was dragged before the Danish monarch, at Hegilsdon. This insolent conqueror is said to have offered him his crown again, on condition that he would do him homage, and pay an annual tribute: but his proposal being re-

\* The abbess of Coldingham is said to have prevailed upon her nuns to cut off their noses and lips, that their beauty might not excite the desire of those cruel ravishers; an expedient which, though it

saved their honour, cost them their lives; for the brutal Danes, incensed at their disappointment, massacred those virgins without mercy.

An.Ch.868.

Sim. Dunelin.

Makes a descent in Wesssex, and fixes his head-quarters at Reading, in Berkshire.

He is defeated by Alfred.

jected by the East-Anglian king, the cruel Dane ordered him to be transfix'd with arrows, and then commanded his head to be severed from his body; at the same time his tutor Humbert, bishop of the East-Anglians, was put to death\*.

Ivar having thus subdued East-Anglia, bestowed the crown of that kingdom upon a Saxon called Ecbert, devoted to his interest, and sending for his brother Ubba, began to form a project for making a conquest of the whole island.

The king of Wesssex being the only power that could obstruct the execution of this scheme, he resolved to turn his arms against that monarch; and embarking his army, landed on the coast of Ethelred's dominions. Advancing in the sequel as far as Reading, they fortified that place as their head-quarters, and from thence made occasional excursions against the forces of Ethelred, who, with his brother Alfred, had by this time taken the field at the head of a considerable army; though the Mercian king refused to join them on this emergency.

This was a very active war, and maintained with equal bravery on both sides: for, in the compass of one year, nine pitched battles were fought with various success. One of the most considerable of these was decided at Ashdown, in favour of the Saxon princes, by the sole courage and conduct of Alfred, who repulsed the Danes to their head-quarters, after they had lost several noblemen, generals of note, and many thousand soldiers, who fell in the engagement.

But Ivar having strong reinforcements, was in two months after this defeat in a capacity to hazard

\* Edmund's head was afterwards found and interred at Saint Edmund's Bury, which derived its name from this unfortunate prince,

who was looked upon as a martyr, and canonized, and a great number of miracles are said to have been wrought at this tomb.

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another battle at Merantun, which proved fatal to the English; for, though they gained a manifest advantage in the beginning of the action, the enemy rallied and returned to the charge, when they were disordered in the pursuit, and obtained a complete victory over Ethelred †, who received a wound that proved mortal. He survived his overthrow but a few weeks, and was succeeded by Alfred, whose coronation was immediately performed at Winchester.

An. Ch. 871.

Ivar obtains a complete victory over Ethelred, who dies, and is succeeded by Alfred.

Chron. Sax. G, Malmes.

## A L F R E D.

**D**Eplorable was the situation of the kingdom, when this great prince ascended the throne. The Danes had already subdued Northumberland and East-Anglia, and gained footing in the very heart of Wesssex; all the churches and monasteries were burnt, and the whole face of the country desolated. In the very first month of his reign he was obliged to march against this terrible enemy; who had advanced to Chilton, where a desperate battle was fought to the disadvantage of the English: yet the defeat was not so great as to deprive Alfred of all resource; that indefatigable prince took such measures for repairing the damage he had sustained, that he was in a very little time enabled to hazard another engagement; and the Danes, who had been very roughly handled in the last battle, dreading his invincible courage and activity, proposed terms of peace, which he did not think proper to refuse. In consequence of this treaty, they evacuated his dominions, and retired

Alfred makes peace with the Danes.

After:

† Thus died Ethelred, a prince of great valour and capacity, whose piety and devotion were so remarkable, that one day while he was employed in the private exercise of his religion, he would not be in-

terrupted, though the Danes had attacked his army. He left divers children, one of whom, called Alfred, was the great grandfather of the historian Ethelwerd.

An.Ch.873. to the North, in order to subdue Mercia, and settle their conquests in Northumberland.

They expel  
Buthred,  
king of  
Mercia; and  
appoint  
Ceolwulf  
king of the  
country.

They marched directly from Wessex to London, where Buthred king of Mercia finding himself unable to cope with such a powerful foe, especially as Alfred was restricted by the treaty from favouring him with assistance, he purchased a peace from Ivar, who leaving the command to his brother Ubba, returned to Denmark, while this last conducted the troops to the banks of the Humber: from thence, however, they advanced in the spring as far as Rippon in Derbyshire, with a view to conquer and make settlements in Mercia, which they ravaged in a dreadful manner, contrary to the articles of the peace they had sold to Buthred, who being afflicted with domestic troubles, and incapable of acting with spirit and resolution, abandoned his kingdom, and fled for refuge to Rome, where he died in the English college. The Danes finding no longer any resistance, took possession of Mercia, the crown of which they bestowed as a deposit with one Ceolwulf, an Englishman, who promised to restore it upon demand; and in the mean time oppressed the subjects with such intolerable exactions, that they would have thought themselves happy under the government of a Dane.

Ingulph.

They receive supplies of men from the continent.

Ubba totally reduced Northumberland, which was now ruled by one of the Danish counts called Rusig, who took possession of the throne upon the death of the last king Egbert, and subdued Mercia, which was governed by a deputy: then the Danes began to fix themselves in different habitations, and cultivate the country, as if they had been natives of the soil; so that England was in a manner divided between Danes and Saxons. Not that the generals had laid aside all views of extending their conquests, when they planted these colonies: during their encampment at Rippon, they were reinforced by



by a strong body of troops from the continent, An. Ch. 871.  
 commanded by Gothrun, Oſcitel, and Amund,  
 who were diſtinguiſhed by the appellation of kings;  
 and this ſupply, while it rendered their power in-  
 vincible, increaſed their number ſo much, that  
 they could not eaſily find ſubſiſtence in one place;  
 ſo that they ſeparated into two bodies, one of which  
 marched into Northumberland, under the conduct  
 of Halden, while the three chiefs or kings fixed  
 their head-quarters at Cambridge.

Chr. Sax.

Notwithſtanding all the booty they had gained,  
 and all the lands they had engroſſed, their rapacious  
 diſpoſition was not ſatisfied: or rather the new-  
 comers arrived ſo faſt and in ſuch numbers, that  
 the countries they had already conquered were by  
 this time occupied, and the late adventurers obliged  
 to turn their eyes on another quarter of the iſland.  
 Halden pretending that he was not bound by any  
 treaty ſubſiſting between Alfred and Ivar, em-  
 barked in the beginning of ſummer, and ſurprized  
 the ſtrong caſtle of Wareham, on the ſouthern  
 coaſt of Weſſex. The Engliſh monarch complained  
 of this deſcent, as an infractiſon of the treaty; but  
 was given to underſtand that the different bodies  
 of Danes were independent of one another: and  
 their ſeveral armaments fitted out at the expence of  
 different companies of adventurers; ſo that any  
 agreement made with one of thoſe bands could  
 have no effect upon the operations of the others.

Halden  
makes a  
deſcent up-  
on Weſſex.

Alfred, thus reduced to the neceſſity of repelling  
 force by force, aſſembled his troops without delay,  
 and took the field with ſuch confidence and alacrity,  
 that Halden thought proper to ſue for peace, and  
 a treaty was concluded in the moſt ſolemn man-  
 ner; the Engliſh king ſwearing upon the relics of  
 the ſaints to obſerve it punctually, and the Daniſh  
 general taking an oath to the ſame purport upon  
 the

Engages in  
a treaty  
with Alfred.

An. Ch. 873.  
Affer.  
Spelman.

An. Ch. 876.  
They sur-  
prise Exe-  
ter, and are  
defeated at  
sea.

the bracelet, which was the most sacred object of the Danish adoration.

In direct violation of this solemn agreement, they fell upon the English cavalry in the night, destroyed the men, mounted their own soldiers on the horses, and surprised the city of Exeter, to which place part of their infantry began their march by land, while the remainder was embarked on board of their shipping, to be conveyed thither by sea. Alfred, equally incensed and concerned at the perfidious conduct of those pirates, whom no ties of faith could restrain; and seeing the manifest advantage they had over him, in the convenience of their ships, by which they could not only receive supplies from their own country, but also transport themselves from one place to another occasionally, with such ease and expedition; resolved to provide himself with a navy, for the security of his coasts, and having invited artists from foreign countries, carried his plan into execution with such amazing diligence, that in a few months he was in possession of a powerful navy, composed of large vessels superior in strength and burden to the small Danish transports, and manned with hardy Frisians, whom he had engaged in his service. With these, being reinforced by a sufficient number of troops, and supplied with all sorts of necessary stores and ammunition, he put to sea and attacked the Danish fleet, consisting of an hundred and twenty ships, bound for Exeter with men and provisions, and destroyed their whole armada, while his army blocked up the town by land. This was such a decisive stroke, that the besieged, despairing of relief, had recourse to negotiations; and Alfred consented to a peace, on condition that they should give hostages, ratify the treaty by oath, and depart from his kingdom immediately. These proposals they

they willingly embraced, and retired forthwith into Mercia, in order to wait for an opportunity to recommence hostilities with some prospect of success.

An.Ch.876.

The West-Saxons were no sooner rid of this enemy, than visited by another, in the person of the famous Rollo, who landed on the coast; but either finding the English prepared to give him a warm reception, or unwilling to interfere with the conquest of his countrymen, he reembarked and turned his arms against France, which he harrassed incessantly, until he made himself master of Normandy, where he fixed his habitation. As for the Danes, who retired into Mercia, they dethroned Ceolwulph, whom they had elevated, and parcelled out the kingdom into counties; in imitation of Halden's conduct in Northumberland, who had, upon the death of Rufig, given the crown to another vassal king of the name of Ecbert: but him he soon deposed, and divided the country among the Danish chiefs.

Rollo lands in England.

Mean while such numbers arrived from the continent, that they were hampered for want of room in the three kingdoms which at present they possessed; and, in order to remove this inconvenience, as well as to prevent themselves from being elbowed out of their own possessions by fresh swarms of new adventurers, they determined to make a general effort against Alfred, and expel him from his dominions. As they were well acquainted with the heroic valour, capacity, and fortitude of that prince, they prepared for this expedition with the utmost secrecy, and having assembled a prodigious army, poured in upon the kingdom like a deluge. Chippenham, in North Wiltshire, one of the most considerable towns of Wessex, was instantly reduced; and the whole country seized with such consternation, that some fled into Wales with precipitation,

The Danes invade Wessex in vast numbers.

An. Ch. 876.

Alfred enters into the service of a cowherd.

capitation, while others submitted and swore allegiance to the invaders.

Alfred, finding it impracticable to appease their fears, or collect a body of forces to face the enemy, yielded to the torrent of misfortune, without resigning his courage or his hope, and concealed himself from the pursuit of his foes, in the most obscure paths of humility. Having disposed his family among persons of known fidelity and attachment, he disguised himself in the habit of a common soldier, and engaged in the service of his own \* cowherd, after having concerted measures for re-assembling a few trusty friends, whenever an opportunity should offer of annoying the enemy, who had by this time reduced the whole country to subjection. This chosen band, rather than forfeit their liberty, and renounce their allegiance to their native prince, retreated to the woods and marshes of Somersetshire, from whence they sallied out occasionally upon the straggling parties of the Danes, whom they hewed in pieces without mercy.

Retires to the isle of Athelney, near Taunton.

Their success in these irruptions not only enabled them to live in this savage state of independency, but contributed to the increase of their number, by encouraging others to join their so-

\* While Alfred remained in this humble station, he one day incurred the displeasure of his landlady, by neglecting to turn a cake that was baking at the fire: she chid him very severely for his laziness, and told him, tho' he could not turn a cake, he could eat it fast enough. The patient prince begged pardon, and promised to be more alert for the future. During his retreat in the isle of Athelney, a beggar came and requested alms, at a time when he had but one small loaf for the subsistence of him and his attendants, some of whom had gone abroad in quest of food, though with very

little hope of success, the adjacent country being waste and desolate. Notwithstanding this miserable exigency, he divided the loaf with the mendicant; and this act of charity, which in a signal manner denotes the benevolence of his heart, was recompensed by a providential store of fresh provision with which his people returned. With respect to the vision of St. Cuthbert, formerly bishop of Lindisfarne, who is said to have appeared to him and his wife upon this occasion, the reader needs not be told what credit it deserves.

ciety.



ciety. Thus augmented, they retired into the isle of Athelney, near Taunton, environed on all sides with brakes and an impassable morass, except a small path practicable by a footman in summer only, which led to an inconsiderable fortress; and this was the residence of Alfred and his consort, who were reduced to the utmost extremity of want, which they patiently sustained during four months, comforting one another with the hope of better fortune; in which they were not disappointed.

Ubba, the chief of the Danish commanders, had ravaged the country of Wales without opposition; and in his return invested the castle of Kenwith, in Devonshire, to which Odun, earl of that county, had retired with a small body of troops, at the approach of the Danes: this gallant nobleman finding himself unable to sustain a siege, and knowing there was no safety in surrendering to such a cruel, perfidious enemy, represented to his followers that they had nothing to depend upon but their valour, and proposed that they should cut their way through the besiegers with their swords. The proposal was embraced, and they sallied out upon the Danes, secure in their numbers and in their contempt of the English; and not only routed them with great slaughter, and slew Ubba, but also took their famous standard, exhibiting the picture of a raven, which was wrought by Ubba's sisters, and revered as an hallowed ensign.

Ubba is defeated and slain by Odun, earl of Devon.

Brompt. Coll.

This victory reanimated the drooping spirits of the West Saxons; and Alfred took the advantage of their favourable disposition, as well as the security of the enemy, who no longer kept within their entrenchments, but dispersed themselves in a careless manner over the whole face of the country. That he might be perfectly informed of the enemy's posture, he entered their camp in person, in the habit of a harper, and remained in the midst of

Alfred reconnoitres the Danish camp in the habit of a harper.

An Ch. 876. of his enemies three whole days, during which he strolled about, and reconnoitred every particular of their oeconomy and situation. He found them lulled in the most supine security, spending their time in riots and feasting, without even appointing the common guards of a camp. Having made his observations, he returned to his retreat, and detached proper emissaries among his subjects, whom he appointed to meet him in arms at Brexton, in the forest of Selwood, where they assembled with great alacrity, under a prince whom they adored.

Obtains a complete victory over them at Yattendun, on the skirts of Hampshire.

An. Ch. 878.

From thence he began his march, in the week preceding Whitsuntide, towards the Danes, who lay encamped at Yattendun, on the skirts of Hampshire; and in the morning of the third day was in sight of the enemy, before they knew he had taken the field. Without giving them time to recollect themselves from their surprize, or range their troops in order of battle, he fell upon them with such impetuosity, that they were immediately routed with great slaughter; and though the remains of them, amounting to a good number, fled for refuge into a fortified camp in the neighbourhood, they were unprovided for a siege, and in less than a fortnight obliged to surrender at discretion. The victor having taken hostages for the performance of articles, proposed that they should either quit the country, after having promised upon oath, that they would never return; or embrace the christian faith, and be contented with such lands as he should assign for their subsistence.

Gothrun, the Danish king, is baptized at Alfred's court.

Those who did not choose to part with their old religion, embarked for Flanders, where they exercised their old trade of depredation, under the command of one of their generals called Hastings: while Gothrun, their sole surviving chief in England, became a convert to Christianity, and was baptized with thirty of his principal noblemen and

a great number of officers, at Aller in Somersetshire, where Alfred kept his court. That prince stood godfather to Gothrun, who having received some valuable presents, and been royally entertained, returned with his retinue to the Danish army, which retiring into Mercia, halted for some time at Cirencester. From thence they marched into the kingdom of the East Angles, which, with the county of Essex, was allotted for their habitation, and Gothrun was permitted to govern it as a feudatory prince \*.

After.  
Spelman.  
Vit. Ælfred.  
G. Malmes.

He supplied this Danish prince with a short code of laws for the government of his subjects; calculated for the propagation of Christianity, the payment of tythes, and other rites of the clergy, the punishment and prevention of incestuous marriages, the abolition of sorcery and divination, the regulation of the boundaries, the encouragement of commerce, and the restraint of rapine. These wholesome institutions had the desired effect, in civilizing the Danes of East Anglia, while those who had settled in Mercia, enjoying the privileges of free denizens, were soon reconciled to a peaceable life, and lived happily under the administration of one Ethelred, a nobleman of great virtue and ability, on whom Alfred bestowed this government with his own sister Elfrida.

He receives  
a code of  
laws from  
the English  
king.

Of those Danes who had inlisted with Hastings, one body separating from the rest, pillaged Flanders, Picardy, Hainault, and Artois, then returned to England, and landing on the coast of Kent, advanced towards Rochester, in hope of surprising that city; but, finding that Alfred had taken the field to oppose their progress, they retired to their ships, and rejoined their companions, whom they assisted in ravaging the country of France. In

Alfred fortifies the sea-coast, and takes London, which, with the kingdom of Mercia, he bestows as a fief upon his son-in-law Ethelred.

\* It was in this year that Alfred built the town of Shaftesbury. Camd.

An.Ch.878. order to prevent such depredations for the future, the English monarch equipped a strong fleet, with which he attacked and destroyed sixteen Danish ships in the port of Harwich; and protected the coast of his realm from those enterprising freebooters: at the same time he repaired the decayed castles on the sea-side, and built a number of new fortifications, so as to cover his whole country from insult and invasion, except by one avenue, which he could not shut. This was the river Thames, through which the Danes had free access to his dominions, while they continued in possession of London. He therefore invested that city, which being weakly garrisoned, was easily reduced; and then having augmented its fortifications, and embellished it with a number of new edifices, he delivered it in charge to his son-in-law Elthelred, or rather bestowed it upon him as a fief of the county

An.Ch.879. of Mercia.

The princes  
of North  
and South  
Wales do  
homage to  
Alfred.

Affer.

Sim. Du-  
nelm.

He encour-  
rages arts  
and  
sciences.

Alfred had now attained to the meridian of power and glory; he possessed a greater extent of territory than had ever been enjoyed by any one of his ancestors; the princes of South and North Wales did him homage for their principalities, the Northumbrians being left without a chief after the death of Halden, desired a king of his creating, and he recommended Guthred, of Danish extraction, but a Saxon by birth, and a zealous christian, who proved a munificent benefactor to the church of Durham.

Having thus established his authority, founded equally on fear and affection, his whole empire enjoyed the most profound tranquillity during a series of twelve years, which he employed in cultivating the arts of peace, and in repairing the mischief with which the war had been attended. He rebuilt the monasteries and churches; fortified and adorned a number of towns, and by appointing London



the place at which the assembly of the states should An.Ch.879.  
 convene twice every year, declared that city the  
 metropolis of England. He invited artificers and  
 manufacturers from abroad, by offering them ex-  
 traordinary encouragement; and being himself a  
 man of uncommon taste and erudition, his patron-  
 age was royally extended to all those who had made  
 any progress in learning or the liberal arts.

Not contented with employing and promoting Establishes  
the univer-  
sity of Ox-  
ford.  
 the learned among his own subjects, he by his  
 bounty allured divers foreigners of distinguished  
 talents, and established them in a seminary at Ox-  
 ford \*, where Germanus and his successors had  
 formerly maintained a school for the education of  
 the British youth. On this occasion three halls  
 were founded for the different branches of gram-  
 mar, philosophy, and theology, and a certain stipend  
 settled for the maintenance of a professor and six  
 and twenty scholars in each, to be restricted under  
 proper regulations, relating to their study and reli-  
 gious duties. These three halls being incorpo-  
 rated, acquired the name of university; so that  
 Alfred is justly celebrated as the founder of that Spelm. vit.  
Ælfrid.  
 venerable institution.

That he might be the better able to extend his His œcono-  
my and de-  
votion.  
 charity and munificence, he regulated his finances  
 with the most perfect œconomy, and divided his  
 revenue into a certain number of parts, which he  
 appropriated to the different expences of the state,  
 and the exercise of his own private liberality and  
 devotion. Nor was he less an œconomist in the  
 distribution of his time, which he divided into three

\* Of those professors that came to  
 England upon his invitation, the  
 most distinguished were Grimbaldus,  
 and Joannes Scotus Erigena,  
 who had writ a treatise against the  
 real presence in the eucharist. These

two learned divines were employed  
 at Oxford in the instruction of youth,  
 but afterwards removed from thence,  
 one to the new monastery founded  
 by Alfred at Winchester, and the  
 other to Malmesbury. *Assef. vit. Alfr.*

*An.Ch. 879.* equal portions, allotting one to sleep, meals, and exercise; and devoting the other two to writing, reading, business, and prayer. That this division might not be encroached upon through inadvertency, he measured them by tapers of an equal size, which he kept continually burning before the shrines of relics. These were his constant companions wheresoever he travelled; and lest the tapers should be affected by the wind or other accidents, he contrived horn lanterns, in which they were equally consumed. But nothing deserves our admiration more than the measures he took to form a militia, under such wise regulations, that every single man of his dominions understood the exercise of arms; and by means of beacons placed at proper distances, and lighted upon any alarm, a body of well-trained forces was still ready to take up their arms, and assemble at the place of rendezvous, under the lieutenant of the country where the immediate service was required. Alfred seemed to be a genius self-taught, that contrived and comprehended every thing that could contribute to the security of his kingdom. He had invented a kind of galley wrought with oars, of such a construction, as rendered it an over-match for any ship of war known at that period of time. Of these he had an hundred and twenty, which not only scoured the seas of the piratical Danes, and covered his coasts from invasion, but protected the commerce of his subjects, which flourished to a great extent: insomuch that the nation abounded with wealth, and all the richest commodities of India, from whence were imported those valuable gems which adorned the crown he wore upon all solemn occasions.

*A fleet of  
Danish ships  
enter the  
Thames.*

The happiness and peace which the people of England enjoyed under the parental sway of this excellent prince, having lasted twelve years with-

out

out interruption, was at length invaded by new alarms. The Danes, under Hastings, having received two terrible checks from Eudes and Arnold, kings of France and Germany, resolved to try their fortune once more in England, not with a view to make a settlement, but in hope of enriching themselves with plunder; for this purpose, they equipped three hundred vessels, which they divided into two fleets, and one of these, consisting of two hundred sail, bent its course towards Kent, where the adventurers landing, surprised Appledore. The other entered the river Thames, under the command of Hastings, who made himself master of Milton, and he and his colleague seemed to vie with each other in acts of rapine and barbarity. Alfred was at that time in East Anglia, settling the affairs of the kingdom upon the death of Go-thrun: and he no sooner received intelligence of the invasion, than he exacted a new oath of allegiance from his East-Anglian subjects, Danes as well as English.

Having taken this precaution, he quitted that country, in order to march against the enemy; but his back was no sooner turned, than the East Anglian Danes declared in favour of their countrymen, and joined Hastings, in hope of sharing his good fortune. Alfred in the mean time assembled his troops, and advanced against that body of the invaders who ravaged the county of Kent; but being informed in his march, that another swarm had lighted upon Wessex, he changed his route, in order to face those who had penetrated into the heart of his own country. They had already invested Exeter; but, being apprized of his approach, they raised the siege with precipitation, and retired to their ships. Their next attempt was upon Chichester, in which miscarrying they sailed to Beaminster, and joined Hastings, who being thus reinforced,

Another  
body invests  
Exeter.

An Ch. 879. forced, ventured to make an incursion to the borders of Mercia, while Alfred was at a distance.

The English troops beat up the Danish quarters at Beamflete.

The English troops, taking the advantage of his absence, found means to beat up his quarters at Beamflete, where they found his wife and children, who had been baptized: these being conveyed to Alfred, he sent them back to the Danish general, with a message importing that he did not make war upon women and christians.

Hastings retires into East-Anglia,

Hastings, unwilling to wait for the king's return from the West, marched with great diligence as far as Shropshire, in his way to Wales, where he expected to be joined by the Britons. But the English generals followed him with equal speed, and at length blocked him up in Buttington, where he and his troops being reduced to extremity, made a desperate effort to cut their passage through the army of the besiegers; and though the greatest part was slain, the rest effected a retreat into East Anglia.

winters at Chester, and returns to Northumberland.

There they raised a fresh body of troops; and being reinforced by their countrymen of Northumberland, set out again for Wales, and marched with such expedition, that they arrived at Chester, where they fortified themselves, before the English forces could come up. As the season was too far advanced for the undertaking of the siege, they were allowed to winter in that desolate place, from whence they began their march in the beginning of spring for Northumberland, and at length arrived in East Anglia.

The Danes compelled to quit the kingdom.

Towards the latter end of the year, they advanced to the borders of Mercia, and erected two forts at Hertford on the Ley, for the security of their ships which they had brought up that river. Here they were attacked by the Londoners, who were repulsed. But Alfred, approaching with his army, and viewing the nature of their situation, turned



turned the course of the stream; so that their vessels were left on dry ground: a circumstance which terrified them to such a degree, that they abandoned their forts, and flying towards the Severne, were pursued by Alfred as far as Quatbridge. There they intrenched themselves for the present, until they found an opportunity of retiring into Northumberland, where their friends supplied them with ships, in which they embarked for Normandy in a miserable plight; after having remained in England three years, during which they had undergone a series of misery and mischance, harrassed, hunted, and diminished one half in their number, by diseases, famine, and the sword. After their departure, Alfred found no difficulty in reducing the East Anglian and Northumbrian rebels, whom he would no longer govern by a substituted king, but took both countries under his own immediate administration.

An.Ch.879

Chr. Sax.  
An.Ch.896.

Having once more re-established the peace of the country by the expulsion of those invaders, he resumed the character of the legislator, in order to finish the plan of government, in the execution of which he had already made such considerable progress. He divided the whole kingdom into counties, the counties into hundreds, and these last into tythings, so denominated because they consisted of ten freeholders, who were pledges to the king of the good behaviour of each other.

Alfred divides the kingdom into counties, hundreds, and tythings.

He compiled an excellent body of laws from the scripture, the institutions of other nations, and the collections or digesta of his predecessors Ethelbert, Ina, and Offa. He was author of that inestimable privilege peculiar to the subjects of this nation, which consists in their being tried by their peers; for he first instituted juries, or at least improved upon an old institution, by specifying the number and qualifications of the jurymen, and extending their power to trials

He compiled a body of laws.

An.Ch.89<sup>3</sup>. of property as well as criminal indictments. He invented the expedient of giving bail and surety, in order to exempt individuals from unmerited imprisonment; he appointed public fairs and markets, to prevent the clandestine sale of stolen cattle; he abolished the civil jurisdiction of thanes or eoldermen, who acted in the double capacity of generals and judges in their respective shires, and substituted in their room shire-reeves, who acted as deputies to these counts or eoldermen. Justices were likewise appointed; but the original extent of their power is not exactly known. And lastly, he ordained that original writs should be granted by the proper officer, without any special petition to the king; by which form, the plaintiff was provided with the immediate means of prosecution and redress.

His precautions against rapine and murder.

But no regulation of Alfred redounded more to his honour and the advantage of the kingdom, than the measures he took to prevent rapine, murder, and other outrage, which had so long been committed with impunity. Every tything-man was bound for the good behaviour of his own family, his neighbours, and guests; and obliged, in case of any breach of the peace, or other crime, to have the offender forthcoming, or, if he fled, to purge himself of all suspicion of being an accomplice.

An Ch.897. Every one who did not enter himself in one of these tythings, was held as an outlaw; and could not be received in any hundred or borough, without a certificate from the tything to which he belonged. One of the ten freeholders presided over the other nine, by the name of tything-man, headborough, or borsholder; and summoned them occasionally to determine small disputes in the neighbourhood.

The different councils of his kingdom.

Alfred, notwithstanding his great capacity, did not fail to consult the sages of his realm upon every affair of importance. All his resolutions with respect to public affairs, passed through three different

erent councils; the first of which was composed of the king's particular friends and favourites, in which every measure was prepared for the second council, consisting of the bishops, counts, viscounts, judges, and some of the principal thanes, afterwards distinguished by the name of barons. The third was the general assembly of the nation, called in the Saxon language Wittenagemot, the members of which owed their admission to their own quality or offices, independent of the king's pleasure or appointment.

Occupied as he was in this great work of laying the foundation of the English constitution, his attention stooped even to the minutest circumstance of his people's conveniency. He introduced the art of brick-making, and built his own houses of those materials; which being much more durable, tightly, and secure from accidents, than timber, his example was followed, first, by his nobles, and afterwards by the subjects in general, who vied with each other in expressing their reverence and affection for this illustrious monarch. He was, doubtless, an object of the most perfect esteem and admiration; for, exclusive of the qualities which distinguished him as a warrior and legislator, his personal character was amiable in every respect. He had made considerable progress in the different studies of grammar, rhetoric, philosophy, architecture, and geometry, was an excellent historian, and acknowledged to be the best Saxon poet of the age\*. And what rendered his erudition the more valuable and surprising, was the gross ignorance

His great  
accomplish-  
ments.

\* He himself translated the Pastoral of Gregory I. Boetius de Consolatione; and Bede's ecclesiastical history. His fame was so extensive, that the pope, in honour of his cha-

rafter, granted new privileges to the English college at Rome; and he was presented with a number of relics by that pontiff, as well as by Abel, patriarch of Jerusalem.

An.Ch.897 of the times, concerning which he himself complained, that from the Humber to the Thames, there was not one priest who perfectly understood the divine service; nor one to be found between the Thames and the sea, capable of translating the easiest Latin book. In a word, he adhered to the wisest maxims of government, calculated for the happiness of his people, of whom he was at the same time the father and the king: his public character acquired the veneration of all his neighbours; his private life betrayed no blemish or imperfection; and he was certainly one of the best and greatest monarchs that ever exercised the functions of sovereign power. What wonder then that the English nation should bitterly lament his death, which happened in the fifty-second year of his age \*, after a troublesome though glorious reign, in the course of which he had experienced the most surprising vicissitudes of fortune.

The death  
of Alfred.

Affer.  
Spelman.  
Vit.Ælfrid.

## E D W A R D.

An.Ch.900.

His son Edward's title  
disputed by  
Ethelwald,

**W**HEN his son Edward ascended the throne, England was inhabited by almost an equal number of Saxons and Danes. These last were in possession of Northumberland and East-Anglia, from which the greatest part of the English families had been expelled. The Saxons occupied all Wessex, comprehending the country to the southward of the Thames, and the ancient kingdom of Essex;

\* By his wife Elfwitha; he had several children, some of which, and among these his eldest son Edmund, died before him. He was succeeded by Edward; his other son Ethelwald was educated at Oxford, where he made great progress in learning.

Of his three daughters, Elfsida married Ethelred, count of Mercia; Ethelwitha espoused Baldwin, count of Flanders; and Ethelgitha was abbess of the monastery at Shaftesbury, founded by her father.

and



and Mercia was in a manner divided between the two nations. The Danes being no longer overawed by the superior qualities of Alfred, and thinking themselves able to cope with the English power, resolved to seize the first opportunity of shaking off the Saxon yoke; and they were soon furnished with a plausible pretence. Ethelwald, the eldest son of Ethelbert, whom Alfred succeeded, was persuaded to claim the crown by the right of primogeniture, though contrary to the will of Ethelwulph, which he pretended to set aside as illegal: but the English were so warmly attached to the family of Alfred, that he could find no Saxon of any consequence who would espouse his cause; and therefore he had recourse to the Danes, by whom, in all probability, he had been at first excited.

Having assembled a small body of adherents, he surprised Winburn, a strong place in Dorsetshire, which, however, he was not able to maintain: for, Edward marched against him with such expedition, that before he could provide for his defence, he was obliged to quit the town with great precipitation, and fly into Normandy, from whence he was conveyed to Northumberland, where the Danes acknowledged him as sovereign of England; and their example was followed by their countrymen of East-Anglia. As he could not be too diligent in strengthening his party against such a formidable antagonist, he made another voyage into Normandy, where he was supplied with troops and shipping by the Danes who had settled in that country, and returned immediately in order to begin the campaign, and oppose the progress of Edward, who had by this time driven the Danes out of several strong places they possessed in Mercia \*.

who surprises Winburn,

and is supported by the Danes.

Brompton. Flor. Wig. Chron. Sax.

Thus

\* On this occasion Elfrida, the king's sister, who had married Ethel-

red, count of Mercia, signalized her courage at the head of her husband's troops.

An. Ch. 900.

Ethelwald  
loses his life  
in an en-  
gagement  
with the  
Kentish-  
men.

Thus supported, Ethelwald raised a considerable army, and made an incursion into the counties of Oxford, Gloucester, and Wilts, which he ravaged without mercy, but retired before he could be overtaken by the forces of Edward, who pursued him as far as the borders of East-Anglia, and wasted all the country between the Ouse, the North Fens, and Bury: then he retreated with the main body of his troops: but the Kentishmen lagging behind for the sake of plunder, were surprised near Bury by the Danes, who remained masters of the field after a very obstinate engagement, yet had no reason to boast of their victory, which was purchased with the loss of Ethelwald, the Danish prince Eonric, and divers general officers: so that the hopes of conquest became every day more and more languid; and after having maintained a kind of lingering warfare for two years after, they were at length fain to sue for peace, which Edward granted, on condition that they should acknowledge his sovereignty, and send back the Normans to their own country.

An Ch. 905.  
Chron. Sax.

The Danes  
defeated at  
Tetenhale,  
in Stafford-  
shire.

Notwithstanding this treaty, which was concluded at Ickford in Bucks, the peace of the kingdom was incessantly disturbed by the Northumbrians and Danes of Derby, Nottingham, Leicester, Lincoln, and Stamford, who joined their forces, and ravaged the adjacent country. At length Edward, incensed at these hostilities, equipped a fleet, in order to infest their commerce and their coasts; and they supposing that the greatest part of his army was embarked, invaded his territories with a strong body of forces, in full confidence of pillaging with impunity. But in their return they were attacked at Tetenhale in Staffordshire,

troops. Having undergone a very dangerous and difficult labour, she would never after admit the embraces of her husband; but resigning the province of her sex, dedi-

cated herself to the exercise of arms, and on account of her valour was distinguished by the name of king Ethelsida.

by

by the West Saxons and Mercians, who defeated them in a pitched battle, which cost them the lives of two kings, a great number of principal officers, and many thousands of their common men; a disaster which humbled the Danes to such a degree, that for some years they remained quiet at home, without attempting any new irruption.

An.Ch 911.

Camden,  
Stafford-  
shire.

About this period, Edward lost a faithful adherent, by the death of Ethelred, count palatine of Mercia: yet his widow Elfsida assumed the reins of government, which she managed with great ability and success. She fortified all the defensible places of the country, and then marched against the Welch, whom she defeated in several engagements, and at length totally subdued. While she was employed in this expedition, her brother Edward rebuilt the town of Hertford, which had suffered greatly from the Danes; and afterwards marching into Essex, fortified a town at Witham, in order to protect his English subjects from the animosity and depredations of that barbarous people. Having taken these precautions for the security of the kingdom, he enjoyed a short pause of tranquillity, during which he devoted his attention to the propagation of the liberal arts, and erected the school of Cambridge into an university.

Elfsida succeeds her husband in the government of Mercia.

An.Ch 915.

This calm was not of long continuance; for a body of Danish horse, from Northampton and Leicester, marching suddenly into Oxfordshire, surprised and defeated a body of Edward's forces at Hokenorton, and returned to their settlements loaded with booty. Another squadron, encouraged by their success, penetrated into Bedfordshire; but the country being by this time alarmed, they were routed and cut in pieces. These were but the preludes to a more formidable invasion of Danish freebooters from the southern parts of Brittany, commanded by Otar and Rohault; who entering the river

The Danes make a descent under Otar and Rohault.

An.Ch.915. river Severne, plundered the Welch and English indiscriminately, and took Cumeleac, bishop of Erchenfield, prisoner, who was ransomed by Edward for forty pounds.

who are  
defeated.

Hitherto they had only sent small detachments on shore to plunder the country; at length they landed their whole force, and advanced towards Erchenfield: but their progress was stopped by the militia of Herefordshire, Gloucestershire, and some neighbouring towns and counties, which assembling in arms, marched against the invaders, whom they routed with great slaughter, they losing Rohault and

An.Ch.918. Otar's brother, who were slain upon the spot.

An. Sax.

They retreat  
into Wales.

The shattered remains of their army took post in a neighbouring wood, where they were so closely besieged by Edward's forces, that they thought proper to capitulate, and give hostages for leaving the kingdom within a limited time. Notwithstanding this agreement, in consequence of which they were permitted to embark, they afterwards stole ashore from their ships, and divided themselves into two bodies, one of which advanced to Wacht, in Somersetshire, and the other to Portlockbey, in the same county, with a view to plunder; but Edward had taken such wise precautions, that they were defeated in both places, and repulsed to their ships, after having lost a great number of men. Then they made an unsuccessful attempt upon the little island of Shipholm, in the mouth of the Severne; and sailing to South Wales, transported themselves from thence to Ireland.

Edward having freed his country from those barbarians, marched into Buckinghamshire, and raised a fort on each side of the Ouze, to overawe the Danes who were settled in that neighbourhood. This expedient had such a good effect, that Thurkytel, a Danish earl of great property in those parts, and all the principal noblemen, submitted to the

English



English monarch; so that his right was recognized An.Ch.919.  
 by all the Danes of Buckingham, Bedford, and  
 Northampton. Yet this great advantage was suc- The death  
 ceeded by an event which he lamented as a very of Elflida.  
 great misfortune, namely, the death of his sister  
 Elflida, who, besides her other conquests, had re-  
 duced Leiceſter and part of Northumberland un-  
 der his dominion.

Having repeopled Bedford with English, and Edward re-  
 fortified Maldon, he granted free liberty to all the annexes  
 Danes to depart from the kingdom, if they did Mercia to  
 not chuſe to live under his adminiſtration: and the crown.  
 Thurkytel, with all his adherents, took the advan-  
 tage of this indulgence; a retreat which greatly  
 ſtrengthened the adminiſtration of Edward, who  
 likewise owed great acceſſion of power to the death  
 of his ſiſter. That celebrated heroine had left one  
 daughter, called Elſwinna, heiress to the whole  
 county of Mercia, the property of which had been  
 veſted in her father by Alfred the Great: and as  
 this alienation from the crown was very prejudicial  
 to her uncle Edward, ſhe began to fear he would  
 take the firſt opportunity of reannexing it to his  
 domains. In this apprehenſion ſhe reſolved to  
 ſtrengthen her poſſeſſion by a match with Reginald,  
 chief king of the Danes in England, and actually  
 engaged in a ſecret treaty for that purpoſe: but her  
 uncle, being apprized of her intention ſo detrimen-  
 tal to his intereſt, took poſſeſſion of the principal  
 cities of Mercia, exacted an oath of allegiance from  
 the inhabitants, and carried the young lady into his  
 own dominions. Thus he became maſter of that  
 populous country, including the city of London,  
 which, though originally belonging to the king-  
 dom of Eſſex, was now become the capital of  
 Mercia.

Chron. Sax.

The Danes were not the only enemies that diſ- Defeats Le-  
 turbed the repoſe of Edward. Griffith ap Madoc, ofred and  
 brother- Griffith ap  
Madoc.

An. Ch. 919. brother-in-law to the prince of West-Wales, together with one Leofrid, a Dane, assembled an army in Ireland, in order to conquer Wales. They accordingly landed in that country, and meeting with no resistance, advanced as far as Chester, before Edward was in a condition to oppose their progress. At length, however, assembling his forces, he divided them into two separate bodies, with one of which he marched against the invaders, whom he overtook at Sherwood, where a desperate battle ensued. The leaders of both armies fought in person at the head of their troops; and Leofrid, the Dane, charging the royal standard with incredible fury, the king was in great danger of being taken and slain; when his son Athelstan, springing forwards to his relief, encountered the aggressor, whom he wounded and took prisoner. Victory forthwith declared for the English, and a great carnage was made among the enemy. Griffith had in another division been attacked, routed, and slain by Edward's generals: so that nothing was wanting to complete the fortune of the day; though the king's glory was a little sullied by the death of the prisoner Leofrid, whom he ordered to be beheaded in cold blood.

An. Ch. 920.

The Danes  
revolt, and  
are reduced.

In the course of the ensuing year, he rebuilt Wigmore in Herefordshire, and Tocester in Northamptonshire, which the Danes had attempted to surprise; but being repulsed with loss, they laid the country under contribution, and all their countrymen inhabiting the neighbourhood of Huntingdon, as well as those of East-Anglia, revolted. They erected a fort at Thamesford in Bedfordshire, from whence they made incursions into different parts of the country, which they ravaged with their usual barbarity. But their fortification in this place, as well as the town of Colchester, which they possessed, was taken by Edward, who ordered all whom

he found in arms to be put to the sword. This severity, by which a Danish prince and two noblemen had lost their lives, exasperated the rest of that people to such a degree, that the insurrection became general; and assembling a numerous army, they undertook the siege of Maldon, from which they were obliged to desist, after having sustained great damage from the sallies of the garrison. Dispirited by such a series of disasters, they again threw themselves upon the mercy of the English monarch, to whom Thurforth, together with the commander of the Danish forces of Southampton, submitted on the terms he was pleased to propose: their example was followed by the Danes settled about Huntingdon, Cambridge, and East-Anglia, who promised in their oath of allegiance to defend his subjects by land and sea.

An.Ch.920.

An. Sax.

Athelstan  
obtains a  
victory over  
the Danes  
and Scots in  
Northum-  
berland.

While Edward was thus employed in reducing the southern Danes, he sent his son Athelstan against those who were possessed of Northumberland, where they lived independent of the English government, and cherished all the rebellions which had been raised. In order to maintain their independency against the power of Edward, their two kings, Sidric and Reinal, suppressed their private animosities, and engaged in a league with Constantine king of Scotland, who sent a body of forces to their assistance, under the command of his son Malcolm. These joining the Danes, attacked Athelstan, by whom they were defeated with great slaughter. And after this victory the Northumbrians sued for peace: the Cumbrian and Strathcluyd Britons submitted to the empire of Edward; and the king of Scots, who possessed part of the ancient Northumbrian territories, consented to hold those dominions in vassalage of the crown of England.

An Ch.922.  
Milton.  
Tyrrel.

Edward now saw himself at the highest pinnacle of power and glory; feared by his enemies, who

An.Ch.922. had submitted to his sway, respected by his neighbours, and beloved by his own subjects with the most warm affection. After he had reduced the whole kingdom of England and principality of Wales to his obedience, he exerted all his endeavours to promote the equal distribution of justice, and the people enjoyed the happy fruits of his mild and equitable administration, until death put an end to his authority, in the twenty-fifth year of his reign.

## A T H E L S T A N.

Edward is succeeded by Athelstan,

**E**DWARD was succeeded in his throne by his eldest son Athelstan, a prince every way qualified for wielding the sceptre of a great empire: he had been knighted by his grandfather \* Alfred in his infancy, and being educated under the eye

\* Brompton tells us, that Athelstan was the son of a concubine called Egwina, the daughter of a shepherd, who having, in her infancy, dreamed that the moon shone out of her belly, so as to illuminate all England, was educated in a genteel manner at the expence of a matron who had given suck to Edward. The young maiden became remarkable for her beauty, and other accomplishments; and one day, when the king visited his nurse, he chanced to cast his eyes upon Egwina, and was so captivated by her charms, that he would not leave the house until he had obtained her consent to gratify his passion. Athelstan was the fruit of this amour, as well as a second son called Alfred, and a daughter named Editha. Though this story is credited by William of Malmesbury and others, it is more likely that Egwina, though of humble parentage, was really the

wife of Edward; so far as we find Alfred the Great honouring Athelstan with the order of knighthood, as his own presumptive heir, which surely would not have been the case, had he been a bastard. Be that as it will, Edward had two other wives, namely, Elfrida, daughter of earl Elfhelm, by whom he had Ethelwald, who died immediately before his father, and Edwin; and Edgiva, by whom he had Edmund and Edred, who afterwards reigned, and two daughters, the eldest of whom was a nun, and the other married Lewis, prince of Guienne. His second wife, besides the sons we have mentioned, bore to him six daughters, two of whom lived in celibacy, and the other four were married to Charles the Simple, Hugh Capet, kings of France, the emperor Orto, and a duke whose territories lay near the Alps. Hist. Major. Winton. 63.



of his aunt Elfrida, his own disposition, which was naturally good, received the most virtuous education. He had signalized his courage and conduct during his father's life, and assisted at all the councils for a considerable time before he mounted the throne; so that he was already an experienced prince, when he began his reign in the thirtieth year of his age, and was crowned at Kingston upon Thames.

An.Ch.925.

G. Malmes.

His election, however, gave umbrage to a few noblemen, who perhaps had some scruples about his legitimacy; and they engaged in a conspiracy to remove him from the throne, in favour of his brother Edwin. Athelstan being apprised of their design, immediately apprehended the chief conspirator, whose name was Alfred; but, the proof being defective, he was sent to Rome to purge himself by oath, in presence of the pope: he accordingly took the oath at the altar, but was immediately seized with a violent fit, in which he expired; and this the pontiff considered as a judgment of God for his perjury. He therefore, in his letter to Athelstan, concluded that the deceased was certainly guilty; and desired to know, whether or not he would allow him christian burial. Athelstan, very well pleased to find himself rid of such a dangerous subject, consented to his being interred with the usual ceremony, and in the mean time confiscated his estate, which he bestowed upon the monastery of Malmesbury, and ordered the particulars of the affair to be inserted in the charter.

A conspiracy formed by one Alfred.

G. Malmes.

This disturbance was no sooner quelled, than commotions arose in another quarter. As the Danish inhabitants of England had been subjected by force, they resolved to assert their independency with the first favourable occasion; and looking upon this as a proper conjuncture, while Athelstan was hardly established on the throne, and discontent prevailed among the nobles, they took the

An insurrection of the Danes in the North.

An.Ch.925.  
Sim. Du-  
nelm.

field, under their kings Sithric and Inguald, who surprised York and Davenport. Athelstan was no sooner informed of this insurrection, than he began his march towards their country, in which he arrived with such expedition, that Sithric, having made no preparations for the reception of such a powerful antagonist, sued for peace, which was granted, on condition that he should embrace the christian religion. Wishing to attach this prince to his interest, that his reign might not be disturbed by the continual incursions of the Danes, like that of his father, he not only pardoned his revolt, but gave him his sister Editha in marriage, though he was then a man in years, and had two sons full grown by a former wife. Sithric survived his nuptials but a few months; and his eldest son Guthred, disdaining to hold a precarious sceptre, dependent upon the will of Athelstan, seized almost all the forts of the kingdom, and prohibited his subjects from paying the tribute to the English monarch.

Athelstan  
reduces  
Northum-  
berland.

Athelstan, alarmed at this rebellion, assembled his troops, and entered Northumberland so suddenly, that Guthred with his brother Anlaf, and Inguald king of York, had scarcely time to secure their persons by a precipitate flight; so that the English king made himself master of the whole country without opposition, except the castle of York, which he could not immediately reduce. He did not however enjoy his conquest in tranquillity, while he had reason to believe the three fugitive princes had any chance of returning to excite fresh troubles in Northumberland. The fate of Inguald is not known; but Anlaf escaped into Ireland, and Guthred fled for protection to Constantine, king of Scotland. Athelstan immediately sent deputies to this prince, desiring he would deliver the person of Guthred into his hands; otherwise he would go in quest of him at the head of an army.

army. Constantine, piqued at this insolent mes-  
sage, yet afraid of incurring the displeasure of such  
a warlike monarch, agreed to meet Athelstan at  
Daker, for which place he accordingly set out, ac-  
companied by Owen, king of Cumberland; but,  
in the mean time, gave Guthred an opportunity to  
withdraw from his court. An. Ch. 925.

Athelstan admitted the excuses of the Scottish  
king, though not a little concerned at the escape of  
the Dane, who made an unsuccessful attempt on  
the city of York, and then turned pirate on the  
high seas; till at length, being weary of such a boi-  
sterous and infamously precarious life, he surren-  
dered himself to the English king, who allowed  
him a pension for his subsistence. This he enjoyed  
for some time: but at last conceiving some disgust,  
he made his escape from the place of his residence,  
and was never heard of afterwards. Athelstan, at  
this conference of the two kings, is said to have  
exactd homage from them both; and notwith-  
standing all the allegations of the Scottish writers,  
who so vehemently deny this act of submission, in  
all probability it was imposed upon Constantine,  
who seems to have retained an implacable resent-  
ment against the English monarch from this period.  
Be that as it may, such homage, extorted from a  
weak prince, by fear and compulsion, can never  
affect the independency and freedom of the na-  
tion.

Constantine returned to his own country, very  
much chagrined at the behaviour of Athelstan;  
while Anlaf, informed of his discontent, repaired to  
his court from Ireland, and artfully inflamed his  
resentment and ambition, by inveighing against  
the insolence and dangerous power of the English  
king, and representing the practicability of con-  
quering Northumberland, by means of the suc-

An.Ch.925. cours he should be able to bring from Ireland. The Scottish prince eagerly embraced his proposal, for the execution of which they began to make preparations without delay; and in the mean time prevailed upon Howel king of Wales to make a diversion in their favour. Athelstan, who had returned to Wessex, broke their measures by his diligence and activity; for so soon as he received intelligence of a commotion in Wales, he began his march for that country, and obtained a complete victory over Howel, whom he punished for his revolt, by augmenting the tribute which he annually paid to England.

Athelstan  
defeats the  
Welsh.

Humbles  
Constantine  
king of  
Scotland.

This war being happily terminated, he advanced into Scotland, in order to take vengeance upon Constantine, for having sent a body of auxiliaries to Howel. As Anlaf had not yet arrived with his reinforcement from Ireland, the Scottish king was in no condition to oppose the English army, which drove him from one end of the kingdom to the other; and at last compelled him to deprecate the wrath of Athelstan with great humility. He obtained his request from the English monarch, who at the same time restored all the places he had taken in that kingdom, hoping, by this act of generosity, to conciliate the affection of Constantine, and detach him from the interest of the Danes. But all this indulgence seemed rather to inflame than mitigate the rancour of Constantine, who became more and more impatient to revenge this mortification, which his pride sustained from the triumph of Athelstan's generosity: that prince was no sooner returned to his own dominions, than he renewed his deliberations with Anlaf; and these confederates exerted all their industry and power, in order to assemble an army of sufficient strength to invade the kingdom of Northumberland.

Florent,  
Sim. Dun.

Mean



Mean while, Athelstan began to be disquieted by jealous thoughts, arising from the popularity of his brother Edwin, who was accused by a certain nobleman of having been concerned in the conspiracy of Alfred. This charge had the greater appearance of truth, as Alfred's rebellion had been raised on pretence of setting Edwin upon the throne; and, in all probability, Athelstan was not very sorry to find a pretext for destroying such a dangerous competitor in the affection of the public. Though the unhappy youth protested, with all the appearance of truth and candour, that he was entirely innocent of the crime laid to his charge, he was convicted on the testimony of this corrupted evidence; and Athelstan, being afraid to take away his life by a public execution, ordered this unfortunate young prince to be turned adrift with one servant, in a crazy vessel destitute of sails, oars, and provision. Edwin finding himself thus exposed to the dangers of the deep and horrors of famine, leaped overboard into the sea, in which all his misery was extinguished with his life, while his attendant resolved to depend upon providence, and saw himself with his boat cast ashore by the billows on the coast of France. This cruel sentence was no sooner executed than the king repented of what he had done: his jealous fears being now removed, he reviewed the character of Edwin in the light of an amiable brother, and detested the wretch on whose evidence that young prince had been exposed to the most terrible death. This perfidious nobleman one day stumbled in presenting the cup to Athelstan; but recovering a firm footing, by means of his other leg, "See, said he, how one brother assists another." This remark was construed into raillery or reproach by Athelstan, who forthwith ordered him to be put to death, as a sacrifice to the manes of Edwin; and endeavoured to ex-

An.Ch.934.

The deplorable fate of Edwin.

An. Ch 934. piate his own guilt by severe penance and benefactions to the church \*.

Athelstan's  
sister married to  
Hugh, king  
of France.

His chagrin, however, was soon alleviated by the respect of his subjects, and the extension of his fame into foreign nations: he received a very splendid embassy in the person of Anwulf earl of Flanders, sent by Hugh king of France with valuable presents to Athelstan, of whom he demanded his sister Edilda in marriage. He gave audience at Abingdon, in a public convention of the states, when the proposal was embraced, and the ambassador treated with the utmost magnificence †.

Athelstan  
obtains a  
complete  
victory at  
Bruneford,  
over Con-  
stantine and  
Anlaf.

During these transactions at the English court, Constantine and Anlaf were busily employed in making preparations for the execution of their project; they formed a confederacy with the Irish, Welsh, and Northumbrian Danes, and conducted their motions with such secrecy, that Anlaf had entered the Humber with a fleet of six hundred sail, and overspread the whole country, before Athelstan received the least intimation of his design. But the fortress, garrisoned with English troops, retarded the progress of the confederates, until he could assemble his army, at the head of which he marched against them with incredible dispatch. They had directed their route to the northward, in order to conquer Bernicia for the Scottish king; but understanding that Athelstan was on his march to attack them, they resolved to spare him part of the trouble, by meeting him on the way, and the

\* He did seven years penance, and built the monasteries of Middleton and Michelness, in the county of Dorset, ordering continual masses to be said for his own pardon, and the repose of his brother's soul.

† The presents made on this oc-

casión, consisted of a curious vessel of onyx, a golden crown adorned with diamonds, the sword of Constantine the Great, in the hilt of which was one of the nails with which Christ was fixed to the cross, the lance of Charlemagne, and some venerable relics.

two armies came in fight of each other at a place An. Ch. 934. called Bruneford. A battle, however, did not immediately ensue, because both armies were so formidable, and so advantageously posted, that neither chose to hazard an attack, until the inattention or misconduct of either side should afford an opportunity. During this pause, Anlaf is said to have entered the English camp as a musician, and played so ravishingly as to attract the notice of Athelstan, who ordered him to perform in the royal tent, and rewarded him with a liberal present. In his retreat he was known by a common soldier, who allowed him to pass, and then informed the king of the discovery he had made. Athelstan chid him for allowing him to retire, but applauded the man's fidelity, when he told him he had once taken the oath of allegiance to that prince, and therefore would never be concerned in any particular attempt against his person. The king shifted his quarters that very day, and the same spot of ground was occupied by a bishop newly come to the camp, who lost his life in consequence of choosing that situation; for, in the middle of the night, Anlaf, at the head of a chosen band, attacked the English encampment, and penetrating to this place, slew the prelate and all his attendants. Athelstan, whose tent was removed at the distance of a mile from this scene of blood, taking the alarm, drew up his forces in order of battle, and at day-break the two armies were fairly engaged. They fought all day with Ingulph, equal bravery on both sides; till at length the chancellor Turkeytul, at the head of a select band of Londoners, bore down all before him, and unhorsed the Scottish king, who was wounded and taken prisoner. The fate of this prince was no An. Ch. 938. sooner made known to the rest of the confederates, than they gave way, and a terrible slaughter ensued. Besides Constantine, who died of his wounds,

An. Ch. 938. wounds, six kings of Ireland and Wales, and twice that number of counts and generals, lost their lives in this engagement; so that Athelstan, after this victory, met with no opposition in reducing the Scots, the Danes of Northumberland, and the Welsh, whose tribute was again augmented. After he had settled the affairs of the North, he marched against the Britons of Cornwall, who had sent auxiliaries to the confederates, repaired and garrisoned Exeter, and compelled the Britons to retire beyond the river Tamur, which from that period served as a boundary between the two nations; at the same time he in person took possession of the islands of Scilly.

His civil administration.

Athelstan was not more formidable in war than consummate in the arts of policy and peace. He added new laws to those which had been published by his grandfather Alfred; took the most effectual measures for securing the tranquillity of his country, both by fortifying it against the attempts of foreign enemies, and preventing domestic disturbances, by a gentle sway and equal administration of justice. He employed learned men to finish a translation of the Bible into the Saxon language; and notwithstanding his piety and beneficence to the church, it appears from some fragments of his laws still extant, that his intention was to reduce the clergy, as well as the rest of his subjects under his dominion, by abolishing those exemptions and sanctuaries, which served only to increase their insolence, and enable them to protect the worst of criminals. That he was highly respected by foreign powers, appears from the great matches he procured for his sisters; one of whom, the widow of Charles the Simple, found a happy retreat in his dominions with her son, who was afterwards distinguished by the name of Outre Mer, or Ultra Marine, from his having been educated at the English court.

Athelstan,



## E D M U N D I.

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Athelstan, after the reduction of the Scots, Danes, and Britons, and the retreat of Anlaf, who returned to Ireland, enjoyed some years of respite from the turmoils of war; and dying without issue, in the sixteenth year of his reign, was succeeded by his brother Edmund, who ascended the throne with the unanimous consent of the whole nation.

An.Ch.942.

Dies.

An. Sax.

## E D M U N D I.

Although the Danes were subdued, they were not yet reconciled to the English yoke, from which they resolved to free themselves with the first convenient opportunity. They considered the accession of young Edmund as a favourable conjuncture, and Anlaf did not fail to improve this disposition, with a view to acquire the crown of Northumberland: but, conscious of the importance of such an enterprize, to be undertaken against the whole power of England, he had recourse to the assistance of Olaus, king of Norway, who supplied him with ships and men, with which he invaded Northumberland, and was admitted into York, by means of a correspondence which he had carried on with the principal inhabitants. The example of the capital was followed by a great many other places, the English garrisons were expelled and massacred, and the whole country received him as its sovereign. Not contented with the possession of Northumberland, he advanced into Mercia, where his reception was alike favourable, and his countrymen in that kingdom assisted him in retaking some places, which had been wrested from them by Edward.

The Nor-  
thumbrian  
Danes re-  
volt against  
Edmund.

Edmund, though scarce turned of eighteen, far from being dispirited by the rapidity of Anlaf's progress,

progress,

An.Ch.942. progress, assembled his troops, and advanced against the enemy, whom he found at West-chester, where an obstinate battle was fought with equal fury on both sides, until night parted the combatants; and the archbishops of Canterbury and York interposing their good offices, an accommodation was effected, on condition that Anlaf should possess all the country lying to the north of Watling-street, which divides England from North Wales, to the southern extremity of Kent. From this cession one would be apt to imagine that Edmund had been worsted in the battle; and that he consented to this treaty with no other view than that of gaining time, until he should be in a condition to make himself amends for the damage he had sustained.

Hunting.

Anlaf was no sooner established in peaceable possession of Northumberland, than he laid severe taxes upon his subjects, in order to discharge the debts which he had contracted with the king of Norway, by whose assistance he had acquired the crown; and by these impositions he lost the affection of his subjects. The inhabitants of Deira revolting, set up Reginald, the son of his brother Guthred, who, being crowned in York, began to make preparations of war against his uncle; so that the kingdom was immediately divided into two factions, breathing against each other defiance and destruction.

Edmund subdues Northumberland, and gives Cumberland to the prince of Scotland.

An. Sax.  
M. Westm.

Edmund, looking upon this as a favourable opportunity for retrieving the dominions he had ceded, began his march towards the North, and arrived upon the frontiers of Northumberland before the two kings had the least intimation of his approach. Thus surprised, before they were in a posture of defence, they were obliged to abandon the island, and Edmund made himself master of the whole kingdom without resistance. Then he advanced against the

the king of \* Cumberland, who had acted as auxiliary to the Danish princes; and depriving him of his dominions, made a present of them, as a fief depending on the crown of England, to Malcolm prince of Scotland, whom he thus attached to his interest. The homage which the Scottish kings in the sequel payed to the English monarch for these territories, was in all probability the foundation of the English claim to the sovereignty of all Scotland; though, by the same way of reasoning, the kings of England were afterwards vassals of France, because they did homage to the French king for the dutchy of Normandy.

An.Ch.944.

Edmund's attention was not intirely engrossed by the operations of war. He likewise employed his study to improve the civil policy of his kingdom; and the laws which he enacted evidently prove how much he had the happiness of his subjects at heart. Observing that pecuniary mulcts were insufficient penalties for restraining thieves and robbers, who have generally very little to lose, he ordained that the eldest member of the gang should be hanged upon conviction; for theft had never before been punished with death in England. The kingdom would, in all probability, have flourished in every branch of culture under a prince of such excellent talents, had not he been cut off in the flower of his age by a very unfortunate and extraordinary accident. While he sat at table with his nobles, celebrating the feast of Augustin, at Pukelkirk in Gloucestershire, he espied among the croud a notorious felon called Leof, whom he had banished for theft and rapine: he immediately commanded his sewer to seize the presumptuous thief, who had

The untimely death of Edmund.

Brompton.

\* This kingdom of the Cumbrians extended from the wall of Severus, as far as Dunbritton in the

western part of Scotland, and comprehended Galloway, Carrick, Kyle, and Cunningham.

thus

**An. Ch. 944.** thus intruded himself even into the royal presence, but perceiving that this officer was not able to manage the delinquent, he himself started from table, and pulled him to the ground by the hair of the head. Leof, knowing that an ignominious death awaited him, drew forth a dagger which was concealed under his cloaths; and while the king lay upon him, sheathed it in the bosom of his prince, who immediately expired. The death of the murderer, whom the noblemen immediately hewed in pieces, was but a poor attonement for the loss of such a valuable king, thus cut off in the flower of his youth, after he had reigned about six years, **An. Ch. 948.** during which he had given such specimens of his extraordinary courage, ability, and regard for the welfare of his subjects. **An. Sax.**

## E D R E D.

The Danes  
of North-  
umberland  
choose An-  
laf for their  
king.

Hunting.

**T**HE two sons of Edmund by his wife Elgiva, being infants, his brother Edred ascended the throne with the unanimous suffrages of the nobility and clergy; and immediately after his elevation he marched into Northumberland, to quell the commotions which his brother's death had excited among the Danes of that province, who were still watching an opportunity of withdrawing themselves from the English government. As they found Edred in their country before they had taken any effectual measures to maintain their independency, they were obliged to submit to the terms which he was pleased to propose; and their example was followed by Malcolm king of Scotland, whom they had engaged to assist them in their revolt. He had no sooner returned to his own dominions after this expedition, than the Danes, ever impatient of the Saxon yoke, resolved to make another attempt to retrieve their liberty; and recalled Anlaf from Ireland.



Ireland with such secrecy and diligence, that this prince had reduced the most considerable places in Northumberland, before Edred could assemble his troops to oppose his progress. Indeef Anlaf made such good use of his time, that he was too firmly established on the throne of Northumberland, to be attacked with any prospect of success; and therefore Edred left him for the present in quiet possession of his conquest. But his own tyrannical disposition produced such discontent among his subjects, and excited such a powerful faction against him, that he was fain to relinquish his throne, which they filled with a nobleman called Eric. Nevertheless one party still continuing attached to the exiled Anlaf, the kingdom, as usual, was divided into desperate factions, and Edred took this opportunity to reduce it under his power: with this view he marched into Northumberland, which he found in anarchy and confusion; and at his approach Eric fled for refuge into Scotland.

The Danes finding themselves thus deserted by their prince, and destitute of all means of opposition, implored the clemency of Edred with the most abject submission, and solemn vows of future fidelity. These he credited, and even restored their king Eric to the throne, on certain restrictions; and having, as he thought, appeased the troubles of Northumberland to the intire satisfaction of the people, he set out from York on his return to Wessex, marching without much circumspection, among a people whom his generosity had laid under such obligations. But the ungrateful Danes perceiving the negligence and disorder in which the English proceeded, assembled and armed themselves in private; then fell upon Edred's rear so suddenly, that nothing but his own personal valour and conduct could have saved his whole army from being cut in pieces. Incensed at such

An.Ch.952.

Edred reduces their kingdom to a province.

An. Ch. 954. such a flagrant proof of their perfidy and ingratitude, he marched back into the heart of their country, which he resolved to destroy with fire and sword; and their ruin would have been inevitable, had they attempted to act in their own defence. But, in this extremity, they once more humbled themselves before the conqueror, laying the blame of what had happened upon Eric, whom they put to death, as a victim offered to the indignation of Edred, who, being appeased by these submissions and apologies, enforced with a round sum of money, forgave them the treachery they had practised against him, though he reduced their kingdom to a province, which he secured with strong garrisons, and left under the direction of an English governor.

Hoveden.  
Sim. Dun.

The great  
influence of  
Dunstan,  
abbot of  
Glaston.

These tumults were succeeded by a profound calm, during which Edred's superstition took the lead of his other passions, and manifested itself in an implicit obedience which he payed to Dunstan abbot of Glaston, who not only acted as his ghostly director, and in that quality gave him corporeal discipline with his own hand, but also acquired such influence over him in temporal affairs, that nothing either in church or state was executed without his advice and concurrence. It was by his counsel that almost all the benefices of the kingdom were bestowed upon monks, and the secular clergy totally neglected, and set aside. Though this partiality raised up a number of enemies against him, which was not diminished by the pride and insolence of his behaviour, it secured the whole body of monks in his interest, and that indefatigable race took all opportunities of sounding his praise, and representing him as a prophet and apostle. These encomiums, repeated on all occasions, made an impression on the minds of the ignorant vulgar, and he was in a fair way of acquiring an absolute authority both in church and state, when

when he was checked in the middle of his career An.Ch.954 by the death of the king, who died of a quincy Sim. Du-helm. in the tenth year of his reign. Feeling his end approaching, he sent for Dunstan, who happened to be absent, in order to settle his spiritual affairs, as well as some temporal concerns unknown to every body but the abbot, who, conscious of having in his hands certain large sums, for which he had not yet accounted, protracted the time on various pretences, until the king had expired, and then appropriated the money to his own use: an acquisition which enabled him to live with great splendor and magnificence.

Thus died Edred, who degenerated from the An.Ch.955 virtues of his predecessors in nothing but his blind attachment to this insolent and rapacious abbot. He was the first of all the Saxon monarchs who assumed the title of king of Great-Britain; a circumstance that favours the opinions of those who affirm that the king of Scotland held his crown as a fief depending upon England. Though he had two sons called Bertfred and Elfred, who were of age at his death, he was succeeded by his nephew Edwy, son of Edmund, who was elected monarch by the suffrages of the nobility and clergy. This elective power was in all probability a privilege which they retained when they first submitted to monarchical government; and a very wise precaution to prevent the mischiefs that attend the administration of an infant king.

## E D W Y.

**E**DWY, who ascended the throne at the age of fourteen, was a prince of great personal beauty, and a very amiable disposition; but, he looked upon Dunstan in a very different light from Edwy ascends the throne, and is insulted by Dunstan.

NUMB. VII.

U

that

An.Ch.955. that in which he had been considered by his predecessor. On the very day of his coronation, he conceived a disgust at that officious abbot, for an affront which a young prince could not easily forgive. Edwy having withdrawn from the tiresome ceremony of the day, to enjoy the conversation of a young lady called Athelgiva, of whose beauty and rare accomplishments he was deeply enamoured; Dunstan no sooner perceived his absence, than he rushed furiously into the apartment to which he had retired, and dragged him forth in the most outrageous manner, after having rebuked him for his effeminacy with all the bitterness of ecclesiastical rancour. Such an unmannerly and unseasonable insult could not fail to inspire the young monarch with resentment; and the nobles, who were scandalized at the overbearing pride and profusion of the abbot, improved this disposition by inveighing against his avarice and presumption, and insinuating that he had embezzled the treasure belonging to the late king, which he now squandered away in purchasing a dangerous popularity. In consequence of these remonstrances, the king demanded restitution of the sums which Edred had committed to his charge; and Dunstan replied they had been expended in pious uses, according to the king's direction. As the council did not think proper to urge him farther in this affair, they resolved to reverse and annul every step he had taken in favour of the monks, and immediately deprived them of all the benefices they possessed, filling their places with the secular clergy.

Dunstan  
goes into  
exile.

This step not only mortified Dunstan exceedingly, as it lessened his credit among the people; but excited such a clamour among the monks, as might have been expected during the most severe persecution that ever raged against the christian religion. Among those that exclaimed the loud-



est against this innovation, were the friars of An.Ch.955. Malmesbury; in consequence of the noise they made, the king expelled them from the monastery, which was filled with secular priests. Dunstan, conscious to himself of having produced this disturbance, quitted the kingdom, and retired to a monastery in Flanders, to wait for some favourable change that might enable him to return with safety.

Hunting;  
G. Malmesb.

The exile of this reputed saint, added to the sufferings of the monks, were hollowed in the ears of the people, as such flagrant instances of the king's impiety, that all the ecclesiastical part of the kingdom espoused the cause of their apostle and his brethren; and Odo archbishop of Canterbury, was so far transported with the spirit of fanaticism, that he pronounced a formal divorce between Edwy and Athelgiva, that he might wound the king in the most tender part. Ecclesiastical censures were of such consequence in those days, that the king could no longer, with any regard to his own safety, maintain his amorous correspondence, but was obliged to surrender his mistress to the penance of the church; and that unrelenting prelate ordered her to be branded in the face, and then exiled to Ireland.

The influence of  
Odo, arch-  
bishop of  
Canterbury.

Not content with having taken such unmanly vengeance, this turbulent bishop, and the other adherents of Dunstan and his monks, first created malecontents by the most scandalous calumnies invented against Edwy, and then instigated them to open rebellion, under the pretence of dethroning such an unworthy king, and transferring the crown to his brother Edgar, who being an ambitious prince, of very insinuating qualifications, willingly lent his name, interest, and personal activity, towards the success of this enterprize. Having put himself at the head of the rebels, and

Edgar rebels  
against the  
king his  
brother;

An.Ch.955. secured the greatest part of Mercia in his interest, he repaired to Northumberland and East-Anglia, where he found the Danes very well disposed to concur in any scheme for involving the English in civil troubles and confusion.

whom he  
deprives of  
great part  
of his do-  
minions.

Flor. Wig.

Sim. Dan.

An.Ch.959.

Thus strengthened, his faction became so powerful, that in a little time Edwy found himself abandoned by all his subjects, except the West-Saxons, and being unable to quell the rebellion, he retired for shelter to the city of Gloucester; while the states of Mercia assembling, deprived him in a formal manner of the sovereign power, and elected Edgar king of that realm, comprehending all the country to the northward of the Thames, except the antient kingdom of Essex. As the monks had been principally concerned in this election, they did not fail to give it the sanction of a miracle, which consisted in a voice from heaven, commanding the assembled nobles to bestow the crown upon Edgar. After the ceremony of his coronation, a treaty was set on foot with his brother Edwy, who yielding to the torrent of misfortune, consented to a partition, which deprived him of the best part of his dominions; but the mortification of seeing himself thus stripped of his territories, and the monks triumphing in his disgrace, threw him into a deep melancholy, which conducted him to the grave, after he had survived or rather lingered out a painful existence, two years beyond the æra of his misfortune.

Edgar had no sooner mounted the throne of Mercia, than Dunstan returned to England, and recovered, at the court of this prince, all the influence he had possessed in the preceding reign. He was immediately promoted to the see of Worcester, and his supposed sanctity shining out with double splendor, after the eclipse it had undergone, the king affected to be entirely guided by his directions.

## E D G A R.

**E**DWY dying without issue, the whole kingdom was reunited under Edgar, who, though in the prime of his youth, had already given undeniable proofs of a shining genius, and the most solid understanding. He had manifested his ability in making himself master of his brother's dominions, and he afterwards demonstrated the extensiveness of his capacity, by keeping his subjects in submission and his enemies in fear, without straining the regal authority, or engaging in any martial enterprize. But, he awed his neighbours by taking such measures for the defence of his kingdom, as disabled them from invading it with any prospect of success. He divided Northumberland into two governments, and constantly maintained a strong body of forces in the northern provinces, that they might be at hand to quell any insurrection that should happen among that turbulent people: and in order to secure his dominions from the descents of the Danes, he equipped a very strong fleet, amounting to three thousand five hundred vessels, divided into different squadrons, and stationed in such a manner that they were continually cruising round the island, which was thus effectually covered from insult. Such wise precautions could not fail to establish peace and tranquillity among his people, which in order to fix beyond any possibility of interruption, he engaged Kenneth, king of Scotland, in his interest, by ceding to him the whole country of Lothain, extending from the Tweed to the Forth; for which, and the northern counties already bestowed upon Malcolm, that prince certainly did homage. It was in all probability owing to this cession and treaty, which

Edgar succeeds to the whole kingdom; his admirable regulations.

Flo. Wig.  
G. Malm.  
Mat. Wests.

secured

An.Ch. 959. secured the Scottish king as an ally, that Maccuse, king of Man and the isles, some toparchs of Galloway, and the princes of Wales, submitted so peaceably to the government of Edgar. These were the princes who visited the court at Chester, and rowed his barge down the river Dee, while he himself sat at the helm: a circumstance which some historians have considered as an act of homage, whereas it appears to have been no more than a compliment or frolic, acted in an excursion of pleasure, that could admit no serious consideration or consequence.

He extirpates the wolves.

Notwithstanding all his vigilance and care in maintaining the peace of his subjects, it was still interrupted by two domestic evils, namely, an infinite number of wolves that came down from the mountains of Wales, destroying the sheep and alarming the neighbourhood; and corrupt evil magistrates, who oppressed the people by a partial distribution of justice. In order to free the country from the first of these plagues, Edgar changed the tribute of the Welch into three hundred wolves heads, to be yearly paid in lieu of money and cattle; and published a general amnesty for all crimes committed before a certain time, provided the criminals would produce an appointed number of wolves tongues, according to the nature of the crimes they had committed: an expedient so effectual, that in three years the species of that animal was utterly destroyed in England. With respect to the magistracy, it was a matter of far greater importance, he enacted a law, by which every magistrate convicted of having pronounced an unjust decision, was mulcted in a sum of money, if it proceeded from ignorance; but if a wilful abuse, he was rendered incapable of holding that or any other office in the kingdom. And the king himself made a yearly circuit through the different parts of his

domi-



dominions to redress the injured, and take cogni-  
zance of the guilty. An.Ch. 959.

The great qualities of Edgar were certainly commendable; but in all probability his praises would not have been so loudly sounded, had not the monks found in him a zealous patron and munificent benefactor. He is said to have founded forty monasteries, and to have repaired and embellished a much greater number, which he endowed, not so properly with liberality as profusion, alienating the crown-lands for the support of those idle and pernicious drones.

All these benefactions were suggested by Dun-  
stan, who not only enjoyed the see of Worcester, Dunstan  
elected to  
the see of  
Canterbury.  
but was also made administrator of the vacant  
bishopric of London. He had, by this time, ac-  
quired such reputation among the people for his  
sanctity and miracles, which the monks did not fail  
to attest and exaggerate, and gained such an as-  
cendancy over the mind of Edgar, that he reigned  
absolute master in military, civil, and ecclesiastical  
affairs. Brethelm, Bishop of Bath, a very worthy  
and pious prelate, but no favourer of the monks,  
being elected to the see of Canterbury, at the death  
of archbishop Elfin, the king resolved to procure  
that dignity for his favourite, and assembled a ge-  
neral council, in which he harangued against the  
inability of Brethelm, and recommended Dunstan  
so warmly, that the former was sent back to his  
original diocese, and the other elevated to the arch-  
bishopric of Canterbury. As this election was not al-  
together canonical, it was found necessary to demand  
the pope's confirmation, and Dunstan immediately  
set out for Rome, on pretence of receiving the  
pall. The pope, who was well informed of his great  
credit at court, and his zeal for the interest of the  
Roman church, not only confirmed his election,  
but also created him his legate in England, with

An.Ch.959. a very extensive authority. He then returned in triumph, and promoted his relation Oswald to the see of Worcester, and that of Winchester was given to Ethelwald his intimate friend: so that this triumvirate acting in concert governed the king and the whole church of England. Dunstan being now too firmly rooted in his power to dread the efforts of his enemies, resolved to execute the grand project he had formed in favour of the monks.

Sim. Dun.  
Ingulph.

The monks  
are restored  
to the bene-  
fices and  
monasteries.

These industrious emissaries let slip no opportunity of inveighing against the luxury and libertinism of the secular clergy, who certainly did not lead the most regular lives; and the minds of the people being thus prepared, the king assembled a council, and in a studied oration declaimed against the irregularities of secular priests, their riots, their amours, and debauchery; then addressing himself to Dunstan and his confederates, conjured them to take some effectual methods for reforming such enormous abuses. As this speech was evidently levelled against the secular clergy, the friends of that body would not venture to oppose the king's inclination, and the triumvirate of bishops took the first opportunity of expelling the seculars from all the churches and convents under their jurisdiction and influence. Perhaps this expulsion would not have been so easily executed, had not the secular priests incurred the censure of the common people, by living in open marriage, notwithstanding the prohibition of the popes, who had already insisted upon the celibacy of the clergy as a fundamental point of religion.

M. West.  
G. Malm.

After this signal service rendered to the monks, Edgar was celebrated not only as the greatest monarch, but also as the holiest king that ever reigned in England. His brother Edwy had been reviled and even excommunicated as an impious wretch, for carrying on a simple intrigue with the fair Athelgiva, whom some historians suppose to have been

been his wife, though the marriage was within the degrees of consanguinity prohibited by the canon law. We have already seen how that poor lady was branded by the fanatic Odo, and transported to Ireland, though he had no legal power to inflict corporal punishment on the meanest subject. On her return she was hamstrung by the same audacious prelate, while her unhappy lover, unable to protect her from such barbarity, or even to revenge her wrongs, was publicly calumniated as a tyrant and an adulterer, and even deprived of the best part of his dominions by the arts and instigations of those ecclesiastical traitors. But Edgar, whose passions were more irregular, indulged them with impunity, even to unpardonable excess: he committed a rape upon a nun, by whom he had a daughter named Editha, who afterwards distinguished herself for her great piety, in consequence of which she was canonized. For this sacrilege, which in Edwy would have been unpardonable, all the penance which Dunstan inflicted, was a slight censure, which delayed the coronation of Edgar, who nevertheless enjoyed his pleasure without controul, deflowering the daughters of his subjects, and snatching that by force which he could not obtain by intreaty.

G. Malm.

The story  
of Edgar  
and Elfrida.

His first wife was Elfrida, surnamed the Fair, daughter of a nobleman called Ordmer, by whom he had Edward his immediate successor; and he afterwards married Elfrida, the beauteous heiress of Devonshire, whose story is too remarkable to be passed over in silence. This young lady had been educated at home, under the inspection of her father Ordnung count of Devon, who had no other child; but notwithstanding her retired life, the fame of her beauty and accomplishments reached the ears of Edgar, who employed his favourite Ethelwald to visit the father on some pretext, which would afford an opportunity of seeing the daughter, that he

An.Ch.959. he might certainly know whether or not her beauty really justified the report he had heard. Ethelwald no sooner saw the fair Elfrida than his own heart was captivated; and, in order to detach the king entirely from this subject, he described her in such a manner as divested Edgar of all curiosity to be further acquainted with her person. Having weaned the king's thoughts from Elfrida, he took occasion to represent to his majesty the advantages he himself should reap from such a profitable match, and having obtained permission to demand her in marriage from the father, succeeded in his suit. Soon after he had thus accomplished his aim, some courtier, who owed him a grudge, explained the whole mystery to Edgar, who, tho' extremely incensed at the treachery of Ethelwald, dissembled his resentment, till he should have an opportunity of investigating the truth by the evidence of his own senses. He accordingly found some pretence for hunting or travelling near Ethelwald's house, and declared his intention of visiting the lady who had been the subject of so much conversation. He was then fully convinced of Ethelwald's perfidious dealing; yet he still disguised his indignation, and in a little time the favourite was found murdered in a wood. The suspicion fell immediately on the king, because he took no steps to discover the perpetrators of the murder; but, as soon as decency would permit, married the widow, by whom he had Edmund, who died in his infancy, and Ethelred, who lived to reign in the order of succession.

Bromton.

An.Ch.975.  
His death  
and character.

The term of his penance being expired, he was solemnly anointed and crowned at Bath, by the hands of archbishop Dunstan, and having survived this ceremony about two years, died at the age of thirty-three, so much in favour with the monks, that not contented with applauding him as a most excellent king, they have likewise represented him

as



as a saint, from some uncommon appearances in his dead body, which was placed close to the great altar in the church of Glassenbury, where they pretend it wrought abundance of miracles. Edgar, far from having any title to this preheminance, was a prince of a very mixed character, in which the vicious passions very often predominated. Though we grant him to have been a sound politician, an excellent legislator, and a monarch whose abilities were employed for the benefit of his country, we must own at the same time that he ascended the throne of Mercia by the most flagrant injustice; that he was superstitious in his religion, lawless in his passion, and bloody in his revenge; for, exclusive of the vengeance upon Ethelwald, he destroyed the whole isle of Thanet with fire and sword, because a few of the inhabitants had been concerned in plundering some merchants from York. He extended his liberality to men of learning and genius; his court was hospitable and magnificent, and generally filled with a concourse of foreigners, who were charmed with his elegance and politeness: and from the tranquillity of his reign, he acquired the denomination of Edgar the Pacific.\*

An.Ch.975.  
G. Mal.  
mess.  
M. West.

Brompton.

\* Tho' he was small in stature, and of slender make, he possessed an uncommon share of personal strength and agility, and was very dextrous at all the exercises of the times. Nor was his pacific reign owing to any defect in point of courage, as he demonstrated on different occasions. Kenneth king of Scotland, while he resided at his court, is said to have ridiculed the diminutive stature of Edgar, one night while he was intoxicated with liquor. His unmannerly jest being reported to the king, he made some pretence to walk along with Kenneth into an unfrequented place, where giving him to understand that he was informed of the contempt

he had expressed for his person, he desired him to draw his sword, and he would convince him of his mistake, if he thought courage depended upon the muscles of the body. Kenneth, struck with this instance of magnanimity, begged pardon for the rudeness of his behaviour, which he imputed to his intoxication: and Edgar admitted of his apology. The Scottish historians deny the truth of this circumstance, as if they thought it derogated from the courage of Kenneth; though it rather redounds to the honour of his memory, as it proves he had sense and candour to make reparation for the offence he had given.

EDWARD

## EDWARD THE MARTYR.

An. Ch. 975.  
Disputes  
about the  
succession  
terminated  
in favour of  
Edward.

**I**Mmediately after the decease of Edgar, Elfsen duke of Mercia, sworn enemy to the monks, expelled them from all the benefices in his country, which he filled again with secular priests; some other noblemen followed his example in different parts of the kingdom, but the duke of East-Anglia and many other persons of the first rank adhered to Dunstan and his party, which was likewise espoused by almost the whole body of the commons, who looked upon that prelate as a saint and apostle. This diversity of sentiments produced a contest concerning the succession; for Elfrida, the queen-dowager, a woman of an ambitious spirit, had by her emissaries circulated some doubts about the validity of Edgar's marriage with the mother of Edward, in hope of raising her own son Ethelred to the throne; and as the other was supported by Dunstan, all that prelate's enemies declared for the son of Elfrida. Though by these means there was a very powerful faction formed in his favour, the archbishop, confiding in his great popularity, arose from the assembly of the states while they were deliberating upon the choice of a successor to Edgar, and taking prince Edward by the hand, conducted him to the church, where he was anointed and consecrated, in the twelfth year of his age, amidst a vast concourse of people, who testified their joy in loud acclamations. Whatever inclination the opposite party felt to controvert this irregular way of proceeding, they would not run the risque of disobliging the multitude, but left Edward in quiet possession of the crown, while his step-mother Elfrida retired to

Cort

Corf Castle in Dorsetshire, which was assigned as An.Ch.975. her dower, and there in secret hatched schemes for his destruction.

Dunstan, having thus secured the continuance of his own power and interest, exerted all his endeavours to maintain the monks in the benefices which they had acquired in the preceding reign, and even employed the king's authority in their behalf. But, Dunstan's intrigues in behalf of the monks. as little regard was paid to the declaration of a minor prince, entirely under his direction and influence, he had recourse to miracles, which more effectually answered his purpose. His proposals in council were seconded by a speaking crucifix, and a vision of St. Andrew: and at a mixed assembly composed of the laity and clergy, who had met at Calne in Wiltshire, the debates running high against the monks, the whole roof of the house fell down, and crushed a number of people to death, while the beam under which St. Dunstan's chair was placed, continued firm and immoveable, and defended the holy bishop, who sustained no damage, though every other person in the assembly was either killed or wounded. This dreadful scene augmented and confirmed the great opinion which was entertained of his sanctity; and his authority gained ground in the same proportion; but some of his enemies were malicious enough to observe that Malmesb. de Gest. R. R. Floreleg. Dunstan had that day hindered the king from appearing in council.

Besides these ecclesiastical affairs, no transaction of consequence distinguished the reign of Edward, Edward is murdered by the direction of his step-mother Elfrida. which lasted but four years, and was concluded in a very tragical manner. The king returning one day from the chace in Dorsetshire, rode up singly to the gate of Corf castle, to pay a compliment to his step-mother Elfrida, who invited him very courteously to alight; and finding him in a hurry

*An.Ch.977.* hurry to be gone, insisted upon his drinking a cup of wine as he sat on horseback; the young prince complied with her request, and as he swallowed the liquor, was stabbed in the back by one of her domestics tutored for the purpose. Edward, finding himself wounded, clapped spurs to his horse, but he fainted with loss of blood; and his foot being entangled in the stirrup, as he fell, was dragged a considerable way, when the horse made a stop of his own accord before the door of a poor old blind woman; there the servants of Elfrida, sent by their mistress to know the issue of her treason, found the unhappy prince quite dead, and terribly defaced by the flints over which he had been dragged. They threw the body into a well, where in a few days it was found, and interred at Wareham, from whence it was afterwards transported to the monastery of Shaftesbury, where it is said to have performed a great many miracles; and Edward was canonized as a saint and martyr. As for Elfrida, she was seized with horror and remorse for the inhuman crime she had committed; in order to atone for which, she founded two monasteries, one at Ambresbury in Wiltshire, the other at Worwell in Northamptonshire; in the last of which she endeavoured to expiate her guilt by a life of penance and mortification.

*Malmesb  
I. ii.*

## ETHELRED II.

*Edward is  
succeeded by  
Ethelred.*

**E**DWARD being thus basely murdered, Dunstan is said to have offered his interest to Edgitha, the natural daughter of Edgar, who was, by this time, abbess of the convent at Wilton: but she was too conscious of the defect in her own

own



own title, and too much terrified at the deplorable An.Ch.979. fate of her brother Edward, to accept his offer; he therefore, having no other pretence to reject the pretensions of Ethelred, crowned and consecrated that prince at Kingston, in the twelfth year of his age. But this ceremony he performed with such malevolence as plainly evinced the rancour of his heart; for, in the very act of placing the crown upon this young prince's head, he prophesied that his reign should be cursed with the misery and slaughter of his subjects, because he had succeeded to the crown in consequence of his mother's guilt, to which this innocent youth was so far from being accessory, that he bewailed his brother's death with all the bitterness of sorrow, and thereby incurred his mother's displeasure and hatred. Had Ethelred inherited the spirit of his father, Dunstan's prophecy would in all probability have been falsified: but he was a prince of very mean parts, though very amiable in his person; his education had been neglected before his accession to the throne, and now that he found himself vested with the regal power, without know-Flor. Sim. Dunelm. ledge or resolution, he was involved in a labyrinth of perplexity, which was increased by his natural timidity, indolence, and distrust.

Such being the disposition and inexperience of The weakness of that prince. the prince, no wonder that the reins of government were relaxed, and all the necessary precautions for the security of the kingdom entirely neglected. The principal nobility, who had been entrusted with the government of different counties, perpetuated the administration in their families, assumed the name of dukes, exercised an independent authority in their own districts, and disregarded that union upon which alone the safety and welfare of the nation could depend. The regulations of the militia were no longer observed: the

An.Ch.979. the English gave themselves up to effeminate pleasures, and hired mercenaries to do the drudgery of war ; and these hirelings were generally Danes, who had no interest but that of plundering the people whom they were employed to protect. Thus the Saxons exposed themselves, with the utmost temerity, to the designs of their most inveterate enemy ; and the government, as if it had conspired against the nation, suffered its chief bulwark, the navy, to decay and perish, for want of maintenance and repair. The Danes, who were settled in England, still retained their old desire of freeing themselves from the English yoke, and, in all probability, encouraged their countrymen to make a descent at this favourable juncture, when the government was weak, and the kingdom defenceless.

An.Ch.982. Accordingly a body of those pyrates arrived in seven vessels ; and having pillaged the town of Southampton and the neighbouring country, sailed round to Cornwall, where they renewed their ancient ravages ; while another armament made a descent upon Portland, and returned to their ships laden with booty. Their motions were so sudden, from one part of the coast to the other, that it was altogether impracticable to secure the country from their depredations, and there was such a languor in the administration, that they were not opposed with that vigour and alacrity which they dreaded in the former reigns. In a word, the country was exposed to the most cruel calamities of war for a series of years, during which the people were robbed, ruined, and murdered with impunity ; for, whenever the enemy were worsted, they retired to their ships, and all the advantage which the English derived from their victory, was the recovery of their own effects, and a very small respite, until the army retreated, or the Danes found

A body of  
Danes in-  
vade Eng-  
land.

found themselves in a condition to repeat their attempt: whereas, when those invaders remained masters of the field, they committed the most barbarous outrages, and left the whole country in desolation. An. Ch. 955.

As Ethelred paid very little regard to the monks, and had more than once made their leader Dunstan feel the weight of his regal power, they seconded the efforts of the Danes, by fomenting the spirit of discontent and disaffection, and exciting civil dissensions, which disabled the administration from taking effectual measures to repulse the enemy, who were moreover encouraged and joined by numbers of their countrymen settled in England. The people at length began to be undeceived with regard to the sanctity of Dunstan, and even to discredit his pretended power of working miracles, because he neither could maintain his own interest in the state, nor avert those calamities which afflicted the nation. They saw with indifference the contempt which Ethelred manifested for the archbishop, especially in a quarrel with the bishop of Rochester, whose cause Dunstan espoused with such violence of zeal, that the king compelled him to purchase his forbearance with one hundred pounds of gold; an exaction for which he denounced a bitter curse against his majesty, and conceived such chagrin and mortification, as in all probability shortened the period of his days. He and his two colleagues, the bishops of York and Winchester, died within a year of each other, and with them the credit of the monks expired. The attention of the common people was too much ingrossed by the miseries of war, to be employed on controversial points of religion; and a mortality that ensued, entirely extinguished the dispute between them and the secular clergy. Dunstan loses all his influence.

*Malmesb.  
Ingulphus.*

An.Ch 987. After the Danes had for ten years successively pillaged the coasts of England, they discontinued their ravages, and the people enjoyed a respite of two years? so that they began to hope the enemy had turned their arms against some other quarter of Europe. But these hopes were fatally frustrated; for, when they least expected such a visitation, Justin and Guthmund, two Danish generals, landed with a strong body of forces at Sheppeswick in Essex; and while they were employed in pillaging, Brithnot, duke of East-Anglia, advanced with his troops in order to surprise them: but they gave him such a warm reception, that he was defeated; and meeting with no further opposition, they advanced into the heart of the country, in which they committed the most horrid excesses. In this extremity Ethelred allowed himself to be persuaded by Siric, archbishop of Canterbury, to buy a peace with a sum of money: and the expedient succeeded so far, that the Danish generals retired; but, at the same time, it encouraged other adventurers of that nation to try the like experiment. Accordingly a fleet of these free-booters appeared in the course of the ensuing year upon the coast of East-Anglia: but, on this occasion, Ethelred took a more wise and manly method of treating the enemy: he assembled a great number of ships from all parts of the kingdom, at London, where he ordered them to be well manned and supplied with munitions of war: then bestowing the command of this armament upon Alfric, duke of Mercia, directed him to block up the Danish navy in the harbour in which it lay at anchor: but the scheme was defeated by the treachery of Alfric, who deserted to the Danes and gave them notice of the danger; so that they put to sea immediately, and escaped. The king was so much incensed at the traitor, that he commanded the eyes of his children to be put out; yet

Ethelred  
buys a  
shameful  
peace of the  
Danes.

Wighorn  
Chron. Sax.

An.Ch.991.



was weak enough to receive him into favour again; An. Ch. 991 and give him another opportunity to repeat his treason. Alfric's motive for acting in this perfidious manner was the desire of being revenged upon the king, for having exiled him after the death of his father, on account of some misconduct or treasonable practices, for which Ethereld, who was his relation, had pardoned and restored him to his possessions.

Hitherto the Danish invasions had been no other than petty enterprizes, atchieved by private adventurers; but, now Swein and Anlaf, kings of Denmark and Norway, allured by the success of their subjects, resolved to have a share of the spoils of England. For this purpose they equipped a numerous fleet, and sailing up the Humber, ravaged Lindsey, and wasted the greatest part of Yorkshire. A body of troops was assembled to oppose them, and put under the command of three counts, who being of Danish extraction, betrayed their trust, and betook themselves to flight in the very beginning of the engagement; so that the English were routed, and the country became a prey to the conquerors. Here the victors fixed their winter-quarters, and in the spring sailing towards the Thames, entered that river without opposition; then landing their troops, made several attempts upon London; but meeting with more resistance than they expected, they desisted from that enterprize, and penetrated into the provinces of Kent, Hampshire, and Suffex, which they laid waste with fire and sword. As they threatened to over-run the whole kingdom in the same manner, Ethelred, being destitute of all means of opposition, had recourse to his former expedient, and promised to pay a considerable sum of money within a specified time, on condition that they would immediately put a stop to hostilities, and quit the kingdom.

Swein and Anlaf make a descent upon England.

An. Ch. 994. dom, as soon as they should receive the tribute. The proposal was embraced, and the two kings retired to Southampton, from whence Anlaf came to visit Ethelred, who persuaded him to be baptized: he had no sooner declared himself a christian, than he promised upon oath, that he would never molest the country of England again, and he kept his word with great punctuality.

Flo. Wig.  
An. Sax.

The English troops are defeated, and Wales and Dorsetshire ravaged by the Danes.

Those two princes set sail together for Denmark, though with very different intentions; those of Anlaf were not more pacific than Swein's were savage and hostile towards the English king. He left a fleet at Southampton, commanded by an officer who had orders to press the payment of the money; and if that should be delayed, to right himself with the sword. He accordingly demanded the immediate execution of the treaty, in the most peremptory manner; and as Ethelred found great difficulty in raising the money, he construed the delay into a refusal, and resolved to renew the war. Finding the country adjoining to his quarters in a posture of defence, he sailed round the Land's-end of Cornwall, and entering the river Severne, made a descent upon Wales; which he desolated with the utmost cruelty; then he penetrated into Dorsetshire, which met with the same deplorable fate, and defeated the troops that were raised for the defence of the country. Having ruined and pillaged whole provinces without further opposition, they re-embarked and sailed back to the coast of Kent, where an effort made by the inhabitants to check their progress, served only to incense them to a greater degree of barbarity and revenge, which they gratified with the utmost inhuman brutality; and what completed the misery of England, a fleet equipped by Ethelred was rendered useless by the discord that prevailed among the commanders.

The

The nation was then upon the verge of ruin, when it was delivered for the present by the dangerous situation of Richard II. duke of Normandy, who being threatened by the king of France with the loss of his dominions, called the Danes over to his assistance. By this accident, Ethelred gained a remission of some months; during which, however, he does not seem to have taken any measures for the protection of his subjects: for the Danes, after having secured Richard in his dukedom, returned to Britain, which they found as defenceless as before. They again ravaged Wales, over-ran Wexsex, reduced Exeter, and filled the country with such consternation, that the inhabitants fled before them, and the king was seized with a panic that prevented him from taking the field in person, or forming any resolution in behalf of his subjects. The Danes proceeded without let or molestation, until they had subdued the isle of Wight, together with the counties of Hants and Dorset, where they established magazines, and from whence they made irruptions into the neighbouring districts. While the southern parts of the kingdom were thus ravaged by the foreign Danes, the northern provinces were occupied by the English breed of the same nation, who, instead of fighting in defence of what was now their country, joined their countrymen, and contributed to its destruction.

An.Ch.994.

England is miserably harraßed by the Danes.

Ethelred seeing his realm reduced to this miserable situation, obeyed the dictates of his fear and despondence, and submitted to pay thirty thousand pounds to those invaders; a sum that was raised by a tax distinguished by the name of Danegelt. In consideration of this tribute, the main body of Danes retired to their own country; tho' a good number chose to fix their habitation in England, where being supported by the natives of the same race, they became extremely insolent and oppressive, living at

The origin of Danegelt.

An.Ch. 994. their ease upon the labour of the English, who were by this time so dispirited by their past misfortunes, that they durst not disobey those haughty foreigners, to whom they gave the appellation of Lord-Danes.

Chron Sax.  
Sim. Dun.

Ethelred  
marries Emma,  
sister of the duke of  
Normandy.

Ethelred finding by experience how little he could depend upon his own subjects in such calamitous conjunctures, resolved to strengthen his hands by an alliance, from which he promised himself assistance and security. The duke of Normandy had hitherto favoured the Danes, who were indeed his own countrymen, in all their expeditions to England; and as his ports were exactly opposite to the British coast, those pyrates found great convenience in being able to run across the channel occasionally, and secure their plunder by returning to the Norman harbours. Ethelred, on the supposition that they would not only be deprived of this advantage, but also diverted from attacking his dominions, if he could form a strong connection with Richard, sent ambassadors to demand of that duke his sister Emma in marriage; and the Norman willingly agreed to the proposal. The lady was brought over to England, where the nuptials were solemnized with great splendor; and in all probability Ethelred might have been benefited by the alliance, had not he defeated all the purposes of the match, by contriving and executing a most execrable and impolitic plan which intailed upon him the hatred of the Normans, and the revenge of the Danish monarch.

Ethelred is  
governed by  
wicked  
counsellors.

Of himself he was weak, fearful, and indolent; therefore we are to suppose that he was instigated on this occasion by the advice of his favourite counsellors, Huna general of his army, and Edric Streona duke of Mercia, whose villainy and misconduct had in a great measure contributed to the distress of the nation. These unprincipled traitors industriously stimulated the king's resentment against the Danes

wh



A. C. 1002.

who lately fixed their residence among the English, by exaggerating the pride and insolence of those people, and representing in aggravated colours the outrages they daily committed, through meer wantonness of oppression. Having roused his resentment they likewise interested his fear, by alarming him with feigned discoveries of a conspiracy those Danes had formed to deprive him of his life; and, while his passions were in a ferment, proposed that he should anticipate their design by making a general massacre of all the Danes in England, except those possessed of East-Anglia and Northumberland, who were too numerous to be mastered by the few English residing in those countries.

The Danes  
are cruelly  
massacred.

They found means to draw such an agreeable prospect of the consequences which would attend this inhuman sacrifice, that the impotent prince agreed to the proposal, and measures were instantly concerted for carrying it into execution. The orders were so distinct, and circulated with such secrecy, that the miserable victims never dreamed of the horrible vengeance that hung over their heads; and on St. Brice's day, the time fixed for the massacre, they were all butchered by the vindictive Saxons, without distinction of age or sex. It was not so much a sacrifice to liberty, as a feast of carnage to gratify revenge, for the slaughter was attended with circumstances of the most savage cruelty. The ruffian Edric distinguished himself in this scene of blood, by an action for which his memory must always be held in horror and detestation. The peace with Swein, king of Denmark, had been principally effected by the mediation of his sister Gunilda, who had embraced the christian faith, and married count Puling, an English nobleman; so that she considered England as her native country, and voluntarily offered herself and family as hostages for her brother's punctual observ-

A. C. 1002. ance of the treaty. From that day she lived under the eye of Edric, who, from meer wantonness of barbarity, devoted this unfortunate princess to death among the undistinguished crouds of her countrymen. He commanded her husband and children to be butchered in her presence, and herself to be transfix'd with four lances; a fate she underwent, never altering a feature in her countenance, after having declared that the shedding of her blood would prove the ruin of the English nation.

Walling.  
Hunting.  
G. Malmes.  
Chron. Sax.

Swein vows  
revenge.

Some of the Danes, more prudent than the rest, instead of flying to churches and altars, which the English polluted with their blood, took refuge on board of a vessel; and hoisting sail for Denmark, carried the news of the massacre to Swein, who was determined to take vengeance on the perpetrators, even before he was made acquainted with the fate of his beloved sister. But when he heard the particulars of her deplorable catastrophe, he was transported with the most furious indignation, and swore he would never sit down in peace, until he should have revenged such a horrible outrage, with the ruin of the English nation. He forthwith began to make preparations for the performance of this dreadful oath. He ordered all the men at arms within his kingdom to assemble at a certain rendezvous, and invited all soldiers of fortune from every country, with promise of ample rewards in the plunder or property of England. At the same time he employed an infinite number of artificers in equipping a very powerful navy; and as the whole nation was animated with a surprising ardour of resentment against the English, he in a very little time was supplied with a fleet of three hundred well appointed vessels, in which he embarked a considerable body of troops, and set sail immediately on this important expedition.

A. C. 1003.

After

After a short voyage, he arrived upon the coast of Cornwall, where he landed his forces without opposition, and ravaged the country as far as Devonshire; then he invested the city of Exeter, the garrison of which was commanded by one Hugh, a Norman; and this villain betrayed it to the enemy, who plundered the houses, and afterwards razed the fortifications to the ground. Ethelred, alarmed at this event, assembled an army for the defence of the kingdom, and conferred the chief command upon Alfric, whom, after his repeated treachery, he again received into his bosom. This consummate traitor advanced into Hampshire, to which Swein had by this time penetrated; and the two armies were already in sight of each other, when Alfric pretended to be taken suddenly ill, and ordered his troops to retire, without hazarding an engagement; a retreat which permitted Swein to pillage Wiltshire, without opposition, and burn and destroy Wilton and Salisbury, which was the scene of his sister's murder. After having thus laid waste the country, he returned to Denmark, where he passed the winter; but, in the beginning of spring he made another descent in East-Anglia, and reduced the whole city of Norwich to ashes.

An.Ch.991.

The treachery of Alfric,

Hoveden.

Chron. Sax.

Ulfketel, governor of that province, presented him with a considerable sum, on condition that he should spare the rest of the country; but notwithstanding this agreement, he surprized Thetford, which underwent the fate of Norwich. Ulfketel, incensed at this breach of faith, assembled a body of troops, and took post in an advantageous situation between the Danish army and their ships, in order to cut off their retreat. Swein, being apprised of his intention, marched back immediately to give him battle; and a desperate engagement ensued, in

The bravery of Ulfketel.

A. C. 1303. in which, though victory declared for the Danes,  
 Flor. Wig. they sustained a considerable loss, and owned they  
 had never been so roughly handled in England before.

The king  
 buys another  
 respite.

The gallant Ulfketel, though of Danish extraction, was the most faithful and valiant nobleman in the service of Ethelred, who was betrayed by his own servants in such a manner that Swein had spies in his court and even in his council; while the majority of the nobles were either corrupted by the Dane, or looked upon the king with such contempt, that they served him with reluctance: and the clergy, particularly the monks, were so avaricious, that they would not contribute to the defence of the kingdom, but pleaded their privileges and exemptions, as if the state had enjoyed the most profound tranquillity. What wonder then, that the king of Denmark should over-run the greatest part of England, without controul. He accordingly desolated Kent, Sussex, and the provinces of the West Saxons; and the misery of the English was compleated by a dreadful famine, which, however, extended to the enemy likewise: so that Swein accepted of six and thirty thousand pounds, in consideration of indulging them with another temporary respite.

Ethelred  
 equips  
 a navy.

The Danes were no sooner departed, than Ethelred solemnized with great magnificence the nuptials of one of his daughters with the perfidious Edric Streon, whom he had created duke of Mercia, a traitor devoted to the Danes, who never let slip one opportunity of betraying the interests of his master. A year being elapsed since the conclusion of the treaty, Swein sent a number of ships to demand another sum equal to that which he had received; pretending it was an annual tribute, which the English had obliged themselves to pay. Ethelred and his council alarmed at this insolent demand,  
 and

A. C. 1007.



and foreseeing no end to the imposition, resolved to A. C. 1007. employ that money in a more effectual manner for the protection of the kingdom, and ordered ships to be built with all possible dispatch in all the harbours and docks in England; every three hundred and ten hides of land being obliged to furnish and maintain one vessel: so that, in a very little time, he was master of a larger fleet than had ever belonged to any of his predecessors. Yet this powerful armament, which rendezvoused at Sandwich, Chron. Sax. was rendered altogether unserviceable by the dissensions of the nobility, who had not virtue or consideration sufficient to sacrifice their private animosities to the safety of the public.

Wulfnoth, father to the famous earl Goodwin, Dissensions among the nobility and officers. was falsely accused by Brightric, brother to the traitor Edric, of some treasonable practices; and knowing that he could not expect justice in a court where his enemies prevailed, he retired with twenty ships, manned by his adherents, who resolved to follow his fortune, and committed depredations on his own country. Brightric, transported with the rage of disappointed resentment, put to sea immediately with fourscore ships, in pursuit of the fugitive, and was overtaken by a tempest that drove the greatest part of the fleet ashore, where it was burned by Wulfnoth. This quarrel between the admirals produced such factions among the nobility, that they retired from court, and the whole navy was destroyed or dispersed in a few months after it had been equipped.

Flor. Wig.

Mean while the Danes did not fail to take the Edric's advantage of those disorders: two fleets of those pirates arrived in the spring, under the command of consummate three generals, who joining their forces in Kent, ravaged the country, and then invested Canterbury, which would have fallen into their hands, had not the inhabitants redeemed themselves with a large perfidy. sum

A. C. 1007. sum of money. While these freebooters were employed in pillaging Kent, Ethelred assembled an army which he headed in person, and took possession of a strong post, with a view to intercept the enemy in their return to the sea side. As the troops were superior to the Danes in number, advantageously posted, and in good spirits, in all probability this effort might have been attended with success, had not the treacherous Edric Streon prevented the action, by dissuading the king from exposing his life to the hazard of a battle against an enemy of such approved valour and experienced cruelty. Alarmed by these artful insinuations, the timorous Ethelred allowed the Danes to pass along quietly with their booty, which they did not immediately convey to Denmark, but fixed their winter-quarters in the isle of Thanet; from whence they made divers incursions into the neighbouring country, and made repeated attempts upon London, from which, however, they were always repulsed.

Ethelred  
pays tribute  
again to  
the Danes.

Hitherto they had been destitute of cavalry, as they had no accommodation for transporting horses from Denmark; but, now being in possession of East-Anglia, in consequence of having again defeated the brave Ulfketel, duke of that province, they found plenty of horses, on which they mounted part of their troops, and by these means soon subdued the counties of Essex, Middlesex, Hereford, Buckingham, Oxford, Bedford, Cambridge, Huntingdon, Northampton, Kent, Surry, Suffex, Hants, Wilts, and Devon, while nothing remained to the forlorn Ethelred but London and Canterbury; nor could he long preserve this last city; for at length they attacked it with such fury, that it fell into their hands; when they pillaged and burned it to ashes, murdered the archbishop Alfga, and slew nine out of every ten Augustin monks whom they found in the place. While the country thus

Sim. Dun.

thus groaned in desolation, the king summoned a council of the nobles, at London, to deliberate upon some measures to remedy the calamities of the nation; and no other expedient seemed practicable, but that of purchasing peace with another sum of money. A negotiation was immediately begun with the Danes, who agreed to quit the kingdom on the receipt of eight and forty thousand pounds; and this sum was no sooner paid than they retired with their booty.

A. C. 1012.

Ethelred  
retires to  
Normandy.

The reader will doubtless be amazed at the infatuation of this unhappy prince, who not only employed the worst of traitors in the first offices of the kingdom, even after he had suffered by repeated instances of their perfidy, but consented to impoverish his country by raising such exorbitant sums, which, far from satisfying, served only to whet the avarice of those invaders, and encourage the rest of their countrymen to engage in the like enterprizes. Scarce had the English begun to taste the happiness of their deliverance, when Swein entered the Humber with such a powerful armament as threatened the whole kingdom with desolation. He saw not the least shadow of opposition in making himself master of Northumberland, East-Anglia, and all the country to the northward of Watling-street; but not contented with these conquests, he took hostages from the principal towns, and leaving the government of the province he had subdued to his son Canute, he made an unsuccessful attempt upon London; from whence he marched into Wessex, which he plundered at his leisure, for there was not the face of an enemy to be seen. Resolved to reduce London, he began to make preparations for the siege of that city; but, while he was thus employed, the unhappy Ethelred, seeing there was no safety for him in his own kingdom, retired privately to the isle of Wight, from whence he sent his

**A. C. 1012.** his two sons into Normandy, with their mother Emma, in order to prevail upon Richard to afford him refuge in his dominions. That prince, though he knew his sister had been unworthily treated by Ethelred, sacrificed his resentment to his magnanimity, and invited the English monarch to his court, where he met with a very generous reception. As for the inhabitants of London, they thought themselves at liberty, by the king's abdication and retreat, to provide for their own safety; and as the place was not in a condition to sustain a siege, they submitted to the king of Denmark, who had by this time subjected all the rest of the kingdom; and Swein was proclaimed king of England, in which there was no person so hardy as to dispute his title.

Swein is  
proclaimed  
king of  
England.

**A. C. 1012.**

Swein dies  
suddenly,  
and Ethel-  
red is re-  
called.

The first act of sovereignty he exercised was laying an insupportable tax on the people: but he did not live to see it exacted; for, in a few months after the surrender of London, he called an assembly of his principal officers at Gainsborough, and died suddenly before the council broke up. The monks pretended he was mortally wounded by the spirit of St. Edmund, because he threatened to lay under contribution the monastery in which that monarch was interred; but in all probability he was poisoned by those honest ecclesiastics, who began to perceive that he would pay very little regard to their privileges and exemptions. After his death the Danes proclaimed his son Canute king of England; but, in spite of all the menaces and intrigues of those invaders, the English recalled Ethelred, and promised to stand by him with their lives and fortunes, in opposition to the Danes, whose dominion they could not endure. At first he suspected their fidelity, but sent over his son Edmund to sound their intentions; and that prince met with such a favourable reception, that the father returned to Eng-



England amidst the joyful acclamations of the people, who took the oath of allegiance anew, and he on his part promised to amend his administration. A. C. 1014.

Such was the ardour of the English to shake off the Danish yoke, that they flocked to his standard from all quarters; and in a little time he found himself at the head of a numerous army, with which he marched directly to Lindsey against Canute, who had agreed with the inhabitants of that country for horses to mount his cavalry. He was so surprised at the sudden approach and activity of Ethelred, who had hitherto been dilatory even to a proverb, that he retreated to his ships with precipitation, and set sail for Denmark, leaving his friends at Lindsey to the mercy of the English monarch, who destroyed their habitations, and punished their persons with the utmost severity. Canute, before he directed his course towards his own country, touched at Sandwich, where he sent ashore all the English hostages, without their hands and noses; a barbarous mutilation which no provocation could justify. It was not so much the fear of Ethelred's arms that induced him to leave the kingdom at this juncture, as the ambition of his younger brother Harold, who at his father's death had attempted to ascend the throne of Denmark, which Canute was not at all disposed to give up for the uncertain prospect of succeeding in his designs upon England. Ethelred marches against Canute.  
Chron. Sax.

Ethelred no sooner saw himself delivered from the Danes, than he relapsed into his former indolence and misconduct. He imposed exorbitant taxes, against which the subjects loudly exclaimed; and was guilty of such acts of oppression, that the people began to despair of his promised reformation. Morcart and Sigferth, two noblemen of Danish extraction, who had been always faithful to his interest, were now sacrificed to his avarice. During Morcart and Sigferth are assassinated.

An.Ch.959. ing the cession of a general council at Oxford, Ederic, the execrable duke of Mercia, and son-in-law to the king, employed assassins by whom they were murdered; and Ethelred immediately confiscated their estates for his own use, as if they had been fairly condemned in the common course of law; while Sigeferth's widow Alaritha was shut up in a cloister; though to this confinement she afterwards owed her elevated fortune. Edmund the king's eldest son chancing to pass by the monastery in which she was immured, had the curiosity to visit the lady of whose beauty he had heard a very favourable report, and became so enamoured of her charms that he married her without his father's consent.

Sim. Dun.

Canute returns to England.

The calm enjoyed by England after the retreat of Canute, was of very short duration: that prince having secured himself in possession of his paternal crown, resumed his design upon this country; and when he was least expected, landed with a numerous body of forces at Sandwich. Ethelred himself being indisposed, his son Edmund and the traitor Streon duke of Mercia took the command of the army, and the prince was in a very little time convinced of the treachery of his brother-in-law. But, as he durst not punish him upon the spot, lest he should incur the hatred of the Mercians, among whom Ederic had great influence, and the displeasure of his father, who could not be persuaded that the duke carried on a treasonable correspondence with the enemy, he divided the army into two bodies, that he might have the opportunity of acting separately from such a perfidious miscreant, who finding himself thus baffled in his favourite aim, which was to betray Edmund, pulled off the mask, and openly declared for Canute. If his defection had affected only his own immediate vassals, Ethelred would have been a gainer by his desertion; but

he

he carried off a considerable body of troops, and forty ships of the navy. A. C. 1014.

Such an accession of power to Canute enabled that prince to execute all his projects without any difficulty ; and the English joined him in crouds, rather than be involved in the ruin of Ethelred, who was at length persuaded by his son to put himself at the head of his army, in order to strike some decisive blow, by which alone he had any chance of retrieving his affairs. The presence of the king and the popularity of Edmund had still such influence among the English, that great numbers repaired to the royal standard; and as they were now actuated by a furious kind of despair, the Danes might have had cause to rue the encounter; but this opportunity was lost by the shameful cowardice of Ethelred, who, pretended to have discovered a design of betraying his person to the enemy, retired percipitately to London; and the Mercians refusing to serve when the monarch was no longer in the field, the army was so weakened by their cession, that Edmund could not pretend to hazard a battle with the Danes.

In this emergency he retired to the North, where he joined Uthred count of Northumberland, who had married his sister Elfgiva, and ravaged the provinces which had declared for the Danes. But Canute did not leave his friends long exposed to these hostilities; for having subdued the greatest part of the southern counties, he marched to their assistance, and at his approach Edmund and Uthred retired into Lancashire. Even there they found themselves so hard pressed by the enemy, that Uthred submitted to the Danish king, who allowed him to enjoy his government; but afterwards ordered him to be put to death, and appointed a Danish governor in his room. Edmund repaired to London, in hope of prevailing upon his father

The shameful cowardice of Ethelred.

who dies at London.

A. C. 1014. to take more vigorous measures; but that weak prince who formerly feigned himself indisposed, was now sick in reality, and expired after a reign of thirty seven years, during which England had been afflicted with the most grievous calamities\*.

Flor. Wig.  
Sim. Dun.  
G. Malmf.

## EDMUND IRONSIDE.

A. C. 1016.  
He is succeeded by  
his son Edmund Iron-  
side.

**E**thelred having resigned his breath, the citizens of London and all the noblemen there present, proclaimed his son Edmund, who had already given signal proofs of his courage and capacity, and acquired the surname of Ironside, from the strength of his constitution: and this young prince was afterwards crowned by Livignus archbishop of Canterbury. But the rest of the bishops, abbots, and a great number of noblemen, declared for Canute, to whom they swore allegiance at Southampton, after having solemnly renounced the race of Ethelred. Mean while Edmund marching into Wesssex, was acknowledged as king by the inhabitants of that, as well as several other provinces, and found himself in a condition to dispute the crown with his rival.

Canute, taking advantage of his absence, sailed up the river Thames, in hope of reducing the city

\* Ethelred, surnamed the Unready, on account of his negligence and sloth, ascended the throne when the kingdom was rich and flourishing; and left it at his death utterly impoverished and desolate. By his first wife Elgiva, he had Edmund, who succeeded him on the throne; Athelstan, who died an infant; Edwy, who was murdered by order of king Canute; and three daughters; the first called Edgiva, married an English count, who was killed in battle; Edgitha, the

second, fell to the lot of the traitor Ederic duke of Mercia; and Edgina, the third, was wife of Uthred count of Northumberland. His issue by Emma of Normandy consisted of two sons, Alfred and Edward, whom their mother sent into her own country, immediately after their father's death; and a daughter called Goda, who first married Walter count of Mantes, and afterwards Eustachius earl of Roulogne.



of London, which was the chief resource of Ed-  
mund; and from which he had been formerly re-  
pulsed by the valour of the inhabitants. He now  
turned the river into a new channel on the Surry  
side, and surrounded the whole city with his works;  
but he still met with such a warm reception, that  
he was once more obliged to desist from his enter-  
prize, and marched into the county of Wexsex,  
where he hoped to find Edmund unprepared for  
his reception. The two armies met at Penne in  
Somersetshire, and a battle ensuing, Edmund ob-  
tained the victory; so that Canute was obliged to  
retreat to Winchester, until his army could be re-  
cruited; and while he remained in this place, he  
ordered another body of Danes to besiege Salis-  
bury.

A. C. 1016.

Edmund  
gains an ad-  
vantage over  
Canute, at  
Penne in  
Somerset-  
shire.

Florent.  
Sim. Dun.

Edmund's army being considerably reinforced in  
consequence of the advantage he had gained, he  
marched after Midsummer to the relief of that city,  
and was followed by Canute, strengthened by the  
men of Hants and Wiltshire, and a great number  
of English under the command of the traitor Edric,  
and two noblemen called Algar and Almar. Ed-  
mund, at the head of an army levied in the coun-  
ties of Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, and Somerset,  
waited for him, at a place called Sceaorstan on the  
borders of Worcester; and there the battle began  
with great fury. The two opposite princes were  
well matched in courage, conduct, and experience;  
and both armies were nearly equal in strength,  
though the Danes had a manifest advantage in point  
of discipline. Never was battle fought with more  
obstinacy and perseverance. It lasted until night  
parted the combatants, and next day was renewed  
with fresh vigour. At length the Danes seemed to  
flag; and the victory would in all probability  
have declared for Ironside, had not their drooping  
courage been revived by a stratagem of the perfi-  
dious

A desperate  
drawn bat-  
tle at  
Sceaorstan.

A. C. 1016. dious Ederic, who cutting off the head of one Osmer, who resembled that prince, and exposing it on the point of a spear, called aloud to the English to quit the field, for Edmund was slain. This contrivance would have answered his purpose, in disperiting the Saxons and animating the Danes, had not Edmund immediately lifted up his beaver, and shewn himself to his soldiers. Having taken this necessary precaution, he rode up towards the treacherous Ederic, and darted a javelin at him with such force, that though it missed the traitor, it pinned his next man to the soldier that stood behind him, and both fell breathless on the field. This gallant achievement. and indeed his whole behaviour during the battle, inspired his army with such vigour, that it required all the conduct and intrepidity of his antagonist to keep his ground, until the second night suspended the dispute. But Canute, foreseeing that he should not be able to maintain a third shock, retired privately, by the help of a dark night, and returned to his ships that were still in the Thames, in order to renew the siege of London.

Sim: Dun.

Edmund  
routes the  
Danes at  
Brentford.

Edmund sensible that he was in no condition, after two such engagements, to march immediately to the relief of that city, beleaguered by such a number of Danes, retired into Wessex, to repair the damage he had sustained; and in this interval Ederic assailed him with such professions of sorrow and contrition, and promises and oaths of future fidelity, that the unwary prince, believing him sincere, took him again into favour, thinking by such acquisition to weaken the hands of his enemies. He had no sooner received the necessary reinforcements than he began his march towards London, and compelled the Danes to raise the siege. Part of their army embarked on board of their ships, and the rest advanced up the river to Brentford, where

where the gallant Edmund, passing the river in the very face of their troops, attacked and routed them with great slaughter. After this action he returned to Wesssex, and Canute seized that opportunity to renew his attacks upon London; but as he could never block it up entirely, and the citizens defended themselves with extraordinary valour, all his attempts miscarried. Thus baffled he embarked his troops, and sailing into the river Orwel, that divides Essex from Suffolk, laid the country under contributions; from thence they directed their course to the mouth of the Medway, and landing their horse, ravaged the whole county of Kent, until Edmund being informed of these devastations, passed the river Thames again at Brentford, and attacking them at Ottenford, drove them before him into the isle of Sheppey. Perhaps this day might have put an end to the war, had not the traitor Edric found means to dissuade the victor from continuing the pursuit; so that the Danes accomplished a retreat to their ships, and were waisted over into Essex, where they recruited their forces.

A. C. 1016

W. Mal-  
mesb.

Then they reinvaded Mercia, wreaking their vengeance upon every thing belonging to the adherents of Edmund, who, now resolving to strike a decisive blow, advanced against them with a strong army, and overtook them at Ashdown in Essex. Here the battle joined with great impetuosity, and the English king made such extraordinary efforts of personal bravery, that victory was on the point of declaring in his favour, when the infamous Edric gave way with the whole wing which he commanded; a circumstance that produced such disorder and consternation among the English, that all the endeavours of Edmund proved ineffectual to restore the fortune of the day: his army was totally defeated; and this overthrow was the more unfortunate, as the best part of the English nobility

Edmund re-  
ceives a ter-  
rible over-  
throw at  
Ashdown in  
Essex.

A. C. 1016. lity perished in the battle, and among the rest, the  
 Hunting. brave Ulfketel, who had upon so many occasions  
 Hovend. signalized his courage and fidelity.  
 Hist. Rams.

This stroke, severe as it was, did not extinguish the hopes, or subdue the fortitude of Edmund, who retired to Gloucester, almost without attendants; but he was so much beloved and admired by his subjects, that they exerted their utmost power and faculties in supplying his wants; so that in a very little time he was enabled to take the field against his conqueror, who had already marched into that part of the country, to prevent him from retrieving his affairs. Those two great princes were again in sight of each other; but no longer so forward, as they had been formerly, to engage. They knew that another battle must be decisive, because the vanquished would be without resource; and therefore they were very cautious in managing this last stake. During this pause Edmund is said to have proposed, that he and Canute should decide the dispute in single combat, in order to spare the effusion of blood; and Canute replied to the proposal, that if the business was only to manifest his personal courage, he would willingly accept the challenge; but he apprehended it would be a very unwise and impolitic step in him, who was a man of a small diminutive stature, to risque his life and kingdom upon the issue of a duel, with a person of Edmund's robust make and uncommon agility. However, as his antagonist had expressed an inclination to spare the effusion of blood, he was ready to open conferences on the subject of peace, and would leave the articles to the determination of the principal officers of both armies. This proposition was eagerly embraced by Edmund, and an equal number of commissioners being appointed on each side, they assembled on the little island of Alney, in the Severne; and after a short conference, a treaty

Makes  
 peace with  
 Canute, and  
 cruelly  
 murdered.



treaty of peace was concluded, and the kingdom divided between the two competitors\*. All the country to the southward of the Thames, together with the city of London, and part of the ancient kingdom of Essex, was assigned to Edmund; and all the rest of England was allotted to Canute. This division was approved by the two kings, who ratified the peace by oath and the exchange of armour: then the Dane retired to his own dominions. Edmund did not survive this convention above a month; for his brother-in-law Edric, fearing that his ruin would be a necessary consequence of this treaty, completed his treachery by suborning two domestics to murder the king at Oxford. Thus fell the gallant Edmund by inglorious hands, before he had reigned a full year; though in that short period he had exhibited repeated proofs of the most undaunted courage, invincible fortitude, consummate prudence, and sublime generosity. The execrable Edric was the first person who carried the tidings of Edmund's death to Canute, making a merit of what he had done for his service†.

A. C. 1016.  
Sim. Dun.  
Walling-  
ford.  
Rudborne

\* Huntingdon and Mathew of Westminster relate, that the noblemen of each army, wearied with incessant war and fatigue, declared openly, that as Edmund and Canute wanted to reign singly, they ought to fight singly, and decide the contention between themselves. The kings being informed of these clamours, agreed to fight in single combat, and the island of Alney was appointed for the lists. There they met in armour, while their respective armies lined the opposite sides of the river, and a most furious encounter ensued. At last the Dane, finding his strength exhausted, desired a parley, and proposed a partition of the kingdom; to which Edmund consented, and then throwing away their swords, they ran into each other's em-

brace, to the equal joy and astonishment of both armies. The articles of the treaty were immediately specified and confirmed, and the two kings parted in amity.

† The manner of his death is variously reported; some authors alledge that the two servants, hired for that purpose, thrust a sharp iron into his fundament while he was easing nature; others say the fact was perpetrated by Edric's own son; while a third set affirm he was taken off by poison. Be that as it will, he left by his wife Alghitha, two sons called Edmund and Edward; and a natural son of the name of Edwy, who was afterwards put to death by Canute's order.

CANUTE

## CANUTE THE GREAT.

A. C. 1016.  
Canute is  
proclaimed  
king of  
England.

CANUTE was shocked at the barbarity of the murder; but he disguised his sentiments, because he had further occasion for the traitor, and even promised to exalt him above all the nobility of the kingdom; an equivocal expression, which was literally verified, in a manner widely different from Edric's expectation. In the mean time Canute resolved to make himself master of the kingdom of Wessex, without paying any regard to the title of Edmund's two sons, or that of his brothers, who resided in Normandy: but as he would not seize it in quality of a conqueror, he assembled the states at London, after his emissaries had tutored the individual members in private, and claimed the succession by virtue of the treaty concluded in the isle of Alney, which he pretended to interpret in a sense implying, that the survivor should inherit the dominions of the deceased, without any regard to the children of either. The states of Wessex, dreading the prospect of another war, and yet unwilling to injure the right of their own royal family, insinuated to Canute, that they would willingly consent to his reigning over them as guardian to Edmund's eldest son: but he refused to accept the crown on such precarious terms, and openly demanded in the assembly, of those who had been present in the treaty, whether or not any thing had been stipulated in favour of Edmund's children? When those Noblemen replied, that their names had not been mentioned on that occasion, he interpreted this silence into a confirmation of his claim; and there was no person present who had honesty and courage enough to oppose such a palpable usurpation. They unanimously acknowledged his title.

He



*CANUTE.*

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He was immediately proclaimed king of all England. The Danish and English noblemen took the oath of allegiance, and he was afterwards crowned with great solemnity.

A.C. 1016.

Flor. Wig

Immediately after his coronation, he divided England into four great governments of Mercia, Northumberland, East-Anglia, and Wesssex. The first he conferred upon the infamous Edric Streon; the second he gave to Eric; the third was bestowed upon Turkel; and he reserved Wesssex to himself, without appointing either duke or count of that province.

Canute divides England into four governments.

As he very well knew that a number of English noblemen repined in their hearts at his accession to the throne, and that the people in general were strongly attached to the race of Cerdic, his first aim was to ingratiate himself with his new subjects by popular measures; and to take the first opportunity of removing those who were the most likely and capable to disturb his government. With that view he affected to declare that he would make no difference between Danes and English in his favours and administration; and then published an edict, importing, that the old laws should be observed in every province, as they were in the time of the Saxons; excepting however the provinces of the North, which were almost wholly peopled with Danes, who had been long governed by the laws of their own original country; This appearance of justice and impartiality had great weight with the people, who looked upon them as happy omens of peace and satisfaction; and every mouth was filled with the praises of this equitable prince, who seemed to have nothing in view but the welfare of his subjects.

Canute having so far succeeded in his scheme, resolved to rid his hands of the two royal infants, believing, that while they lived he should never possess

A. C. 1016

Canute  
sends the  
sons of Ed-  
mund a-  
broad, in  
order to be  
murdered.

They are  
protected by  
the king of  
Hungary.

Brompton.

possess the throne in peace. He would not venture to take away their lives in England, though the traitor Edric would have gladly undertaken the task, because their death would have been naturally laid to his charge; and such a suspicion might have sapped the foundations of his government. He therefore, on pretence of sending them to travel, committed them to the care of a trusty Dane, who had orders to take some effectual method to prevent them from returning to England.

This minister, less barbarous than his master, compassionating the situation of those hapless orphans, instead of carrying them to Denmark, according to the instructions he had received, conveyed them to the king of Sweden, whom he had made acquainted with Canute's intentions. That prince, whatever abhorrence he conceived of this inhuman design, was unwilling to incur the displeasure of Canute, by entertaining them at his court; he therefore sent them to Solomon king of Hungary, from whom they met with a very hospitable reception. Edmund died at this court, but Edward married the queen of Hungary's sister Agatha, daughter of Henry II. emperor of Germany, by whom he had Edgar Atheling, and Margaret, afterwards queen of Scotland. There still remained in England two sons of Ethelred II. one legitimate, the other a bastard; though both were known by the name of Edwy. Even these Canute looked upon as obstacles to his interest, and banished from the kingdom: the first however he afterwards recalled, on pretence of bestowing upon him marks of his favour, and then found means to deprive him of his life.

But he could contrive no scheme for the destruction of Edmund's brothers, Alfred and Edward, who resided with their uncle Richard II. duke of Normandy, and might be one day enabled by that prince

prince to assert their title to the throne. In order to avert that danger, he endeavoured to engage Richard in his interest, by demanding in marriage his sister Emma, the mother of the young princes, and offering his own sister to the Norman. Richard and Emma assented to the proposal; and the double marriage was celebrated accordingly, to the unspeakable chagrin of the two princes, who never could forgive their mother for espousing the inveterate enemy of her first husband, and much less for defrauding them of their right, by subscribing to a marriage contract, which settled the succession of the crown upon the issue of the marriage.

A.C. 1016.  
Canute mar-  
ries Emma,  
the widow  
of Ethelred.

A. C. 1017.

W. Malmes.  
Flor. Wig.  
Chron. Sax.  
He puts the  
traitor Ed-  
ric to death.

Canute having taken these precautions, to establish himself firmly on the throne of England, thought nothing was now wanting to render his authority absolute, but the death of some noblemen, whom he dreaded for their power, or hated for their disaffection. The principal of these were, the dukes of Mercia and East-Anglia, and the count of Northumberland. He knew Edric Streon to be an infamous traitor, upon whose fidelity he could not rely; and therefore doomed him as the first victim to his own security. With respect to this wretch, his interest and equity in a very little time chanced to coincide; for, Edric was rash enough to tell him in public, that he had not been rewarded according to his services; and in particular made a merit of having taken away the life of Edmund, in consequence of which Canute had ascended the throne. He had no sooner pronounced these words, than Canute regarding him with a stern look, "Since, said he, thou has owned thyself guilty of that execrable treason, thou standest self-convicted, and shall immediately suffer the punishment thou hast deserved by such an atrocious crime." So saying, he ordered him to be beheaded on the spot; then his body was thrown into

A. C. 1017. into the Thames, and his head fixed upon the highest part of the Tower, that his promise to Edric might be literally fulfilled.

Hunting.

Lays a heavy tax upon the nation.

Flors Wig.  
Chron. Sax.

He makes a voyage to Denmark.

Immediately after this execution, a pretence was found for banishing Eric, count of Northumberland; and Turkel, duke of East-Anglia, fearing his turn would be the next, thought proper to anticipate his fate by going into voluntary exile. Several other noblemen of less consideration were sacrificed to the king's jealousy, and their offices filled with his own creatures; and now being secure from all check or controul, he ventured to saddle the nation with a tax, for raising eighty thousand pounds, to pay off the arrears of the Danish army, the greatest part of which was sent back to his own country. Howsoever grievous this tax might be, the English cheerfully contributed towards an imposition that would be the means of freeing them from such disagreeable guests; and their acquiescence in the king's pleasure was in a good measure owing to their comparing the present tranquillity they enjoyed with the miseries of war they had so lately undergone.

Canute, having thus provided for the peace and security of the kingdom, resolved to visit his own country, where his presence was necessary to prosecute a war which had broke out between the Danes and the Vandals. He accordingly set sail with a body of English troops, commanded by earl Goodwin, and accompanied by all the noblemen whom he thought the most likely to raise disturbances in his absence. He arrived in Denmark at a very critical conjuncture, when the Vandals had actually penetrated into his country; and taking the field without delay, advanced in order to give them battle. But during the night that preceded the day fixed for the engagement, Goodwin, at the head of the English troops, charged the enemy with such

impe-



impetuosity, that they were totally routed with great slaughter; and Canute in the morning found a victory before he knew any thing of a battle. This exploit endeared the English to his affection, and raised Goodwin to such a degree in his favour, that he gave him in marriage Thyra his sister-in-law, and maintained him in all the power and splendour of the ducal dignity, at a time when he strove to reduce in others that exorbitant authority, which had been wrested from the crown in times of trouble and confusion.

A. C. 1020.

Malmesb.

Malmesb.  
Poutan.

This war being happily finished, he returned to England, and henceforth made no distinction between Dane and Saxon, in the distribution of his favours. Justice was administered with the utmost impartiality, and the people enjoyed peace and affluence under his equal administration. Yet, in order to recommend himself still more warmly to the affection of his English subjects, he built churches at all the places which were distinguished by the slaughter of the Saxons during his struggle for the crown: he erected chantries, in which continual prayers were said for the souls of the slain, repaired some monasteries which had suffered by the Danes, and founded a new convent at Bury, in honour of St. Edmund, who had been murdered an hundred and fifty years before this period, by his ancestors, and was highly revered all over England. He convoked the states at Winchester, where Thurkytel was outlawed for having been concerned in the murder of St. Alfage; and many other popular laws were enacted. Those of Edward I. were translated into Latin for the use of Denmark; and Canute redoubled his industry in taking every step that could render him agreeable to the English nation. About this period, understanding that Anlaf or Olave king of Norway was despised and hated by his subjects, because he restrained them

Conciliates  
the affection  
of the Eng-  
lish.

**A. C. 1020.** them from the exercise of rapine, to which they had been so long accustomed ; he, in order to take advantage of their discontent, sent over large sums of money to corrupt the noblemen, and raise a strong party in his favour : but before he could bring his project to bear, his own dominions in Denmark were invaded by the Swedes. Alarmed at this attempt, he set sail for that kingdom, and engaged Ulf and Eglaf, the two Swedish generals, who defeated him in a pitched battle ; so that he was fain to return that same year to England. He succeeded better, however, in his designs upon Norway, whither he sailed with a powerful fleet, and took possession of that kingdom, while Olave fled for refuge into Sweden. About two years after this expulsion he made an attempt to recover his crown ; but being deserted by part of the forces he had assembled, and overpowered by numbers, he lost his life in the battle of Stucklastad.

Flor. Wig.  
Sim. Dun.

Robert duke  
of Norman-  
dy demands  
that Canute  
shall do jus-  
tice to Al-  
fred and  
Edward.

As for Canute, notwithstanding all the pains he had taken to establish his authority, a conspiracy was formed against his life, by one Hacum, a Danish nobleman, who had married his niece ; but it was happily discovered, and the traitor sent into banishment. This danger was succeeded by another, which had like to have been attended with very important consequences. The dukedom of Normandy having devolved to Robert, son of Richard II. he resolved to espouse the interest of his cousins Alfred and Edward, the sons of Ethelred, who still resided in that country ; and actually sent ambassadors to demand of Canute the inheritance of those princes. His embassy being disregarded, he equipped a powerful fleet, in order to invade England : but his ships were so damaged and dispersed by a storm, that the enterprize miscarried ; though he still continued to make preparations for a second trial. Canute being informed of his intention, and

well acquainted with his great power, thought A. C. 1003. proper to temporize, and make proposals of accommodation. He even offered to resign some part of Wesssex to the princes during his own life; and found means to protract the negotiation, until Robert undertook a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. The expedition to England was therefore postponed till his return, which never happened, and his dukedom devolved to his bastard son William, who afterwards mounted the English throne, under the name of the Conqueror.

A. C. 1037.

This storm being blown over, Canute devoted Canute makes a journey to Rome. his chief attention to works of piety; and as he had founded his power in blood, he set out on a journey to Rome, where he hoped to obtain a full absolution for all his sins. Even in the execution of this religious scheme, he did not forget the interest of his people, but purchased an exemption from toll and duties in favour of the English merchants and pilgrims, through all the dominions that lay in his way. He likewise obtained from the pope some privileges for the English college at Rome, and a mitigation of the expence incurred by metropolitans in the article of the pall; as well as certain favours and immunities for the pilgrims of his country, who went to visit the tombs of the apostles. Having made sumptuous presents to his holiness and the churches of that capital, he returned by the way of Denmark, and on the road sent Livignus, abbot of Tavistock, the companion of his travels, with a letter to the English nobility, exhorting all sheriffs and magistrates to administer justice impartially; in particular to protect the poor from oppression, and see the church-dues regularly paid to the clergy. Nor did his conduct belye his professions; for, when he arrived in England, he ordered all the Saxon laws to be inviolably observed; forbade markets, fairs, and other secular assemblies on Sunday,

A. C. 1031. Sunday, and enjoined all christians to come thrice a year and receive the eucharist.

Malmesb.

Advances  
against Mal-  
colm king  
of Scotland.

The last military expedition he undertook was against Malcolm II. king of Scotland, who, while he possessed the county of Cumberland as heir apparent to the Scottish throne, had refused to contribute towards the Danegelt raised by Ethelred; and bravely replied, that he was ready to pay the enemy with steel but not with silver. This answer incensed Ethelred to such a degree, that he employed against him the armament which had been prepared against the Danes, in wasting the county of Cumberland; but, that quarrel was compromised. When the Danes over-ran England, Malcolm refused to do homage or pay tribute to their kings, whom he considered as usurpers; and he had defeated divers armies of that kingdom, who had landed in Scotland with their families, to make settlements in the country: at length a peace had been concluded between him and Canute, which was inviolably preserved by the Dane till such time as he found it convenient to forget the articles. Malcolm's grandson Duncan, a prince of slender abilities, was now prince of Cumberland, as heir apparent of the Scottish crown; and he refusing to pay homage to Canute, the Danish king, after his pilgrimage to Rome, assembled an army, in order to reduce Cumberland by force of arms. Malcolm, in behalf of his grandson, advanced with his army to give him battle, and a furious engagement would have ensued, had not the prelates and noblemen of both armies interposed their mediation, and effected a peace; by which it was agreed, that Duncan from the time being, and all his successors princes of Scotland, should hold Cumberland according to the original tenour, and do homage for that fief to Canute and his successors kings of England.

Ferdun:  
Malmesb.

After



After this accommodation, Canute met with A. C. 1035. nothing to disturb his tranquillity. From his conquests he derived the surname of Great; but he merited that epithet much more by the virtues he manifested during the pacific period of his administration. Though he had shed an ocean of blood, and trampled under foot all laws divine and human, in making his way to the throne, he was no sooner established in the regal authority, than he seemed to change his disposition, and became conspicuous for his justice, piety, and moderation, so as to acquire the love of his subjects and the esteem of mankind \*. In this happy situation, he lived Canute dies. several years, and at length resigned his being at Shaftesbury, in the nineteenth year of his reign, leaving by his first wife, who was daughter to the earl of Northampton, two sons called Swein and Harold; and by Emma, who survived him, another named Hardicnute, and a daughter called Gunilda. who was married to Henry III. emperor of Germany.

\* Huntingdon relates an instance of his behaviour in private life, which argued his good sense and abhorrence of flattery. One day, while he walked on the sea shore, accompanied by his courtiers, who offered the grossest incense of adulation, and even compared his power to that of the Deity, he ordered a chair to be placed upon the beach, while the tide

was making; and sitting down, commanded the sea to retire: but being in a little time surrounded with water, he rose up and chid his flatterers for having bestowed upon him those encomiums which were due to God alone. From that moment he never would wear the crown, but ordered it to be placed upon the head of a crucifix in the church of Winchester.

## H A R O L D I.

A. C. 1035.  
Partition of  
the kingdom  
between Ha-  
rold and  
Hardicnute.

Ingulph.  
Emma, Enc.

Goodwin's  
intrigues in  
favour of  
Harold.

**C**ANUTE, before his death, had established his son Hardicnute on the throne of Denmark, and given Norway to Swein; but, as he had not mentioned a successor for the kingdom of England, a contest ensued among his children, and the English prelates and nobility were divided into three parties. But the chief dispute lay between the partizans of Harold and Hardicnute; the first was espoused by all the Danes settled in England, while the English declared for Hardicnute as the son of Emma. The contention was carried on with such heat, that a civil war had well nigh been the consequence; but, at last it was terminated by an agreement, importing that the country to the northward of the Thames should belong to Harold, and Hardicnute possess all the rest of the kingdom; and that, as this last was absent in Denmark, his mother Emma should reside in Winchester as regent of the West-Saxons, and govern the kingdom for her son by the direction of earl Goodwin, who was at the head of the English nobility. Harold, perceiving that this nobleman acted with unbounded authority and influence, as administrator of his brother's kingdom, resolved to bring him over to his interest; and succeeded in the attempt by means which are easily conceived, when we know that Harold had seized all his father's treasure.

Goodwin, being thus engaged in his cause, managed his talents for intrigue with such address among the West-Saxons, that they looked upon themselves as neglected by Hardicnute, and began to turn their eyes upon his brother Harold. Emma, being informed of these transactions, and finding herself incapable of supporting the interest

of Hardicnute, had recourse to dissimulation, and affected to withdraw herself intirely from worldly affairs, visiting churches and monasteries, and employing all her time in exercises of devotion. By this conduct, she thought she had effectually lulled the suspicion of Goodwin, who, though he still governed the kingdom, in the name of Hardicnute, employed all his arts in private to strengthen the interest of Harold. Her design was to bring over the sons of Ethelred from Normandy, on pretence of a visit to their mother, in hope that the affection of the English would, by their presence, revive in favour of the race of Cerdic. When she expressed a desire of seeing her children, Goodwin immediately perceived her drift, and gladly consented to gratify her intention, with a view to recommend himself still more strongly to Harold by the murder of those princes. Emma, who little dreamed of any such inhuman design, wrote a letter of invitation to her sons, whom she encouraged with the hope of recovering their inheritance; and they accordingly arrived with a train of a thousand Normans.

The hearts of the English were warmed by the appearance of those princes, descended from their own glorious monarchs, whose memory they held in the utmost veneration; and they received them with such cordiality as alarmed the traitor Goodwin, who therefore hastened the execution of his treacherous design. He had seemingly been the most eager of all the noblemen in doing honour to the sons of Emma; but that princess, whose maternal fondness rendered her wary and circumspect, never allowed them to visit together, but still retained the one under her own eye, while the other was entertained by the noblemen in the country. Goodwin, finding it impracticable to entangle them both at once in his snare, resolved to perpetrate his treason upon Alfred the eldest, whom

The tragical  
death of  
prince Al-  
fred.

A. C. 1035. he arrested with all his followers in the castle of Guilford, by virtue of Harold's order. Upon this occasion he is said to have tampered with the prince, by offering him his interest, on condition he would marry his daughter; and that Alfred having rejected the proposal with some expressions of disdain, he was so incensed at the affront, that he ordered the unhappy prince's eyes to be put out, and massacred six hundred Normans, by whom he was attended. He then conveyed him to Ely, where he was confined to a monastery, in which he languished for some time in misery and pain, and then expired. Edward, being apprized of his brother's fate, was by the care of his mother sent privately back to Normandy; and Goodwin finding himself hampered in the execution of his schemes, by the presence of this ambitious and intriguing princess, found means to impeach and convict her of treasonable practices against the state; so that she was banished from the kingdom, and took refuge with Baldwin earl of Flanders, who generously assigned the city of Bruges for her abode and subsistence.

The kingdom united under Harold.

Goodwin, being now absolute master in the kingdom of Wessex, and Hardicnute still delaying his departure from Denmark, that infamous minister surrendered his power into the hands of Harold, who was proclaimed and crowned king of all England. This prince, who was surnamed Harefoot from his agility, no sooner mounted the throne than he laid a tax upon the people for the equipment of a navy to prevent invasions; and in all probability this imposition would not have produced so much discontent, had it not been intended to prevent the success of Edward, whom the English considered as the true heir to the crown. Not but that the son of Edmund residing in Hungary had the advantage over him in proximity of blood,

yet



## HARDICNUTE.

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A. C. 1035.

yet he was at too great distance to have any correspondence or party in the kingdom; and indeed the English would have elected any prince of the most slender pretensions, rather than be governed by Harold, whose brutal character they detested, and whose authority was founded intirely on the interest of Goodwin and his associates. Normandy was too much divided during the minority of William to afford any considerable succours to Edward, whose genius was by no means enterprising; and therefore the English had recourse to Hardicnute, their countryman by birth, whom they conjured to come and take possession of the throne, promising to support his claim with their lives and fortunes. That prince seemed at length to wake from his lethargy, and fitting out a fleet of sixty ships, set sail on pretence of visiting his mother at Bruges, where while he resided, he was blessed with the news of Harold's death.

Angl. Sac.  
A. C. 1040.

## HARDICNUTE.

THE Danes as well as English unanimously joined in making a tender of the crown to Hardicnute, who, at his arrival in England, was received with the most extravagant demonstrations of joy, and earl Goodwin distinguished himself as the first nobleman who did him homage. The ceremony of his coronation was scarce performed, when, impatient to give his mother a convincing proof of the detestation in which he held his brother Harold, by whose order her son Alfred had been destroyed, he ordered the body of the deceased king to be dug up, decapitated, and thrown into the Thames, where it was found by some fishermen, and privately interred in the church-yard of St. Clement, which was the Danish burying-ground.

Hardicnute  
succeeds to  
the throne.

A. C. 1040. Hardicnute's next act of sovereignty was the imposition of a grievous tax for the payment of his navy, which was the more intolerable as the nation was threatened with a famine. This measure produced universal murmurs through the whole kingdom; and the inhabitants of Worcester raised an insurrection, in which two of the collectors lost their lives. The king, being informed of this outrage, ordered Goodwin duke of Wessex, Leoffric duke of Mercia, and Siward count of Northumberland, to assemble a body of forces, and revenge the insult, by destroying the town, and exterminating the inhabitants; an order which was literally obeyed. These were marks of a cruel disposition; though it must be owned that Hardicnute was a pious son, and an affectionate brother to Edward, whom he invited to his court, and entertained with the most cordial hospitality. It was also at this juncture that he celebrated the nuptials of his sister and Henry III. emperor of Germany, with incredible magnificence; though that lady found herself extremely unhappy, from the jealousy of her husband, and afterwards obtained a divorce.

im. Dun.

By this time the Norman interest triumphed at the English court, in the presence of Edward and the interest of Emma, who had not yet forgot the tragical death of her eldest son. It was doubtless with a view to gratify her resentment, and pay court to Edward, who would in all probability one day mount the throne, that Alfric archbishop of York accused Goodwin of being an accomplice in the murder of prince Alfred; and Edward demanded justice accordingly. Goodwin found means to evade the danger of this impeachment, by appealing to the avarice of the king, whom he presented with a magnificent galley curiously carved and gilded and manned with eighty soldiers, cased in rich armour, with magnificent swords and lances, and each of them a golden bracelet, weighing sixteen ounces.

## EDWARD III.

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on his arm. By virtue of this present, he was permitted to purge himself by oath, and readily swore he had no hand in the death of Alfred.

A. C. 1040.

Sim. Dun.

Hardicnute  
dies sud-  
denly.

Hardicnute did not long enjoy the crown, which indeed he was unworthy to wear. He was a slave to all his passions, and particularly addicted to feasting and drinking, which he indulged to beastly excess. These debauches at last cost him his life; for he died suddenly in consequence of over-eating himself at the wedding of a Danish lord, celebrated at Lambeth; and his death, far from being regretted, became the subject of mirth to the English, who distinguished the anniversary of it by the name of Hock Holiday.

A. C. 1041.

G. Malmes.

## EDWARD III.

Surnamed the CONFESSOR.

EDWARD, who chanced to be in England at the time of Hardicnute's death, was advised by his friends to have recourse to the assistance of Goodwin, who alone was able to support or defeat his pretensions. By this time indeed, Goodwin had engrossed such power and influence in the kingdom, as no subject had ever possessed. Besides the dignities of duke of Wessex, earl of Kent, and high treasurer, vested in his own person, his eldest son enjoyed the governments of Oxfordshire and Herefordshire; and his great wealth, interest, and alliances, had rendered him more than a match for any faction that could be raised to oppose his designs. It was therefore a salutary advice, in pursuance of which Edward, who a few months before had prosecuted him for the murder of his brother

Edward sol-  
licits the in-  
terest of  
Goodwin.

A.C. 1043.

Flor. Wig.  
Hoveden.

Gul. Pict.

By whose  
interest he is  
crowned.

ther, now solicited his interest in the most humble supplications, and promised to be entirely ruled by his directions. Upon these terms Goodwin espoused his cause; and after having obtained his promise that he would marry his daughter Egitha, employed his interest so effectually in his behalf, that he was proclaimed king of England, and crowned by Edfi, archbishop of Canterbury. What facilitated this event, was the national hatred between the English and Danes, which at this time was increased to an implacable degree of rancour, by the insolence of Hardicnute's followers, who had committed such outrages of all sorts, that the people were no sooner apprised of the king's death, than they took to their arms, and butchered or expelled all the Danes who had accompanied him to England. Goodwin seized this favourable opportunity of convoking an assembly of the states, in which with an eloquence peculiar to himself, he expatiated on the miseries which that people had entailed upon the nation; and when their minds were properly warmed, he presented Edward, as a descendant of their ancient kings, whose claim would be supported by the whole power of Normandy.

His remonstrances had the desired effect, and united all the suffrages in favour of Edward surnamed the Confessor, a prince of very mean parts, who had neither capacity to rule, nor resolution to maintain his authority. His continual attachment to trifles, his want of discernment, and timorous disposition, enabled his officers and domestics to impose upon his weakness, and encouraged the governors of provinces to render themselves absolute and independent. Earl Goodwin in particular, gradually usurped such a share of power and authority, that he was more considered than the king himself; and no doubt, the narrowness of the king's

genius



genius was one of the concurring motives which induced him to support his claim; because he knew his own credit would rise in proportion to the incapacity of Edward, under whose name he accordingly managed the whole kingdom. Not but that Edward hated Goodwin in his heart, both as the murderer of his brother, and the controuler of his own authority; and this doubtless was the cause of his aversion to the accomplished Egitha, whom he delayed to wed, under various pretences, until he durst no longer defer the performance of his promise, lest he should incur the resentment of her father: and even after the nuptials were solemnized, he never consummated the marriage. As he had not courage enough to avow his sentiments, he affected to heap favours on his father-in-law; and this impolitic dissimulation increased the power and credit of Goodwin, by convincing the people that he was beloved by his sovereign.

G. Malmes.

Edward, notwithstanding his titles of Saint and Confessor, which he acquired by his attention to the formalities of religion, was a stranger to the christian virtues of charity and forgiveness, as well as to that natural affection which usually springs from the ties of blood. He had entertained a grudge against his mother, since the day she espoused her second husband; and all the efforts she made in the sequel to raise him to the throne, and screen him from the practices of his enemies, had not been able to destroy the impression, or even conquer his desire of revenge, which he now resolved to gratify. Without paying the least regard to her quality, he repaired to Winchester, where she resided, and, stripping her of all her treasures and effects, left her nothing but a very moderate pension for her subsistence; so that, in her old age, this daughter of a prince, and widow of two great kings, was reduced to extreme poverty, by the cruelty

His cruelty  
to his mother Emma.

A. C. 1043.

Cambden.

Dorset.

cruelty of her own son. Edward was not yet satisfied with the unnatural vengeance he had taken; but afterwards is said to have ordered her to be tried, for having carried on a scandalous commerce with Alwin, bishop of Winchester. Robert the Norman, afterwards archbishop of Canterbury, was her accuser; and as he could not prove his allegations by evidence, he insisted upon her proving her innocence by undergoing the fiery ordeal. She accordingly walked blindfold, over twelve burning plowshares, without being hurt, to the astonishment of a multitude of spectators.

Swein loses

king-

of

Norway.

Sim. Du-

nelm.

In the midst of these laudable avocations, Edward was alarmed with an account of mighty preparations making by Swein, king of Norway and Denmark, to assert his title to the crown of England, in right of his father Canute. The country was immediately put in a posture of defence, by the care of earl Goodwin, assisted with the endeavours of Leoffric duke of Mercia, and Siward earl of Northumberland; and Gunilda, niece of Canute the Great, was obliged to abandon her family and leave the kingdom, lest she should hatch some conspiracy in favour of her countrymen. But, this cloud was dispelled by a war that broke out between Swein and Magnus, son of Anlaf, late king of Norway; in consequence of which rupture Swein's armament was otherwise employed. Magnus not only recovered the crown of his father, now known by the name of St. Olave, but afterwards invaded Denmark; so that Swein was fain to solicit the king of England for succour. Goodwin advised Edward to send fifty ships to his assistance; but this proposal was so warmly opposed in council by Leoffric and Siward, that no step was taken in favour of Swein, who was driven from his kingdom, though he recovered his throne after the death of his enemy. The troubles of Denmark,

how.

however, did not hinder the pyrates of that coun- A. C. 1043.  
try from infesting the English coasts. A body of  
these adventurers arrived at Sandwich, in five and  
twenty vessels, and ravaged the country, from  
whence they not only carried off the plunder which  
they found, but even the people themselves, whom  
they sold as slaves in foreign markets. They after-  
wards cruised upon the coast of Essex, pillaging  
the country, and spreading terror and consternation  
wheresoever they moved, until earl Goodwin, and  
the other two noblemen above-mentioned, assembled  
a body of forces, and repulsed them to their ships  
with great consternation.

These enemies had no sooner disappeared, than A. C. 1046.  
another adventurer alarmed the coast. This was Depreda-  
tions com-  
mitted by  
Swein, the  
son of  
Goodwin.  
no other than Goodwin's son Swein, who had been  
obliged to leave the kingdom for having carried  
off an abbess, of whom he was enamoured. He  
had retired to Denmark, in full confidence of ob-  
taining his pardon, through the intercession of his  
father; but whether Goodwin was willing that his  
son should suffer for the offence he had committed,  
or the king was inexorable with regard to an out-  
rage offered to religion, the young count found  
himself disappointed in his expectation; and re-  
solved to be revenged on his country for the inflexi-  
bility of the king. With this view he equipped  
eight vessels, and committed depredations on the  
English merchants and the coasts of the kingdom,  
which he plundered and burned without mercy.  
Goodwin fearing that these violences might incense  
the king against him and his family, and furnish  
a handle to his enemies, prevailed upon count Beorn,  
son of Ulphon, by Estritha, sister to Canute the  
Great, to employ his good offices with Edward,  
in favour of his rebellious son; and that nobleman  
obtained his pardon upon certain conditions. Then  
he repaired to Swein, in order to make him ac-  
quainted

A. C. 1046.

acquainted with the success of his negotiation, and persuade him to submit to the king's pleasure; when that brutal pirate, supposing the count's intention was to betray him into the hands of justice, slew his benefactor with his own hand, and ordered his body to be thrown into the sea. This barbarous murder retarded the accommodation; but the king afterwards pardoned the ruffian, notwithstanding the complication of his crimes; so much was he afraid of incurring the displeasure of Goodwin. Indeed there was another reason which concurred with this motive for taking off the outlawry of Swein at this juncture: another fleet of Danish freebooters had arrived on the coast, and were actually joined by the traitor's squadron; which reinforcement rendered them so formidable to England, that it was no wonder Edward used this expedient for weakening their power.

Rog. de  
Hov.

Edward's  
partiality  
to the Nor-  
mans.

No part of Edward's conduct gave more offence to the English noblemen, than his partiality in favour of the natives and customs of Normandy, where he had been educated. The Norman language became so fashionable at his court, that it was spoke by every person who studied to insinuate himself into the king's good graces. The government of several important fortresses, and many posts of great honour and advantage, were bestowed on those foreigners; and some of their ecclesiastics were preferred to English bishoprics. Among these was Robert, a monk of Jumieges, first elected bishop of London, and then translated to the see of Canterbury. This prelate, with some learning, possessed a great fund of cunning and insinuation, by which he gained an ascendancy over Edward, and counterbalanced the credit of Goodwin, who loudly complained of being misrepresented to the king by the meddling priest, and resolved with the first opportunity to deprive his majesty of such an officious



cious counsellor. In a word, these two courtiers hated one another with the utmost rancour, and each in secret projected plans for the destruction of his rival; when an accident happened which reduced the earl to the brink of ruin, and furnished the king with an opportunity of manifesting his hatred to that insolent nobleman.

A. C. 1046.  
Ingulph.

Eustace, count of Boulogne, who had married Edward's sister Goda, arrived in England to visit his brother-in-law, who received him with great honour and affection; and having tarried some days at his court, set out for Dover in his return to France. A servant, whom he had dispatched before him to bespeak lodgings in that city, happened to quarrel with the townsmen, and a fray ensued, in which he lost his life. The count and his attendants attempting to revenge his death, the inhabitants took arms: and both sides engaging with great fury, Eustace and his retinue were obliged to retire, after having lost about twenty of their company, and slain an equal number of the English. The count, exasperated at this insult, returned to the court at Gloucester, and demanded justice of the king, who forthwith ordered Goodwin, in whose government the tumult happened, to march with a body of troops, and chastise the offenders with fire and sword.

A. C. 1051.  
Eustace,  
count of  
Boulogne,  
insulted by  
the inhabi-  
tants of  
Dover.

The earl, thinking he had now found an opportunity of recommending himself to the English nation, and of being revenged on the Norman archbishop at the same time, flatly refused to obey the king's command; observing that the English were not used to be condemned unheard; and that the equitable way of terminating this affair would be a legal trial, in consequence of which the guilty might be punished by law, that, as earl of Kent, it was his duty to protect the people whom he was ordered to punish; and that the resistance they had

Goodwin's  
insolence to  
the king.

A. C. 1051. made was in their own defence, against an insolent foreigner, who ought to be surrendered to justice, and suffer for the mischief he had done. Edward, though shocked at this audacious remonstrance, dissembled his wrath, because he wanted the sinews of vengeance: the archbishop and his Norman friends did not fail to blow the flame of his resentment; but they were in no condition to support him against the power and interest of Goodwin, should he come to an open rupture with that nobleman. He therefore dispatched emissaries, in whom he could confide, to duke Leoffric, and count Siward, to inform them of Goodwin's insolence, and desire their immediate presence and assistance, to humble the pride and presumption of that dangerous subject, who dared to brave the royal authority.

He raises an  
army and  
threatens  
Edward.

This step was not taken so secretly, but that it reached the ears of Goodwin, who resolved to be beforehand with the king; and with the assistance of his sons raised a strong body of forces, on pretence of marching against the Welsh, who had erected a petty fort on the frontiers of Herefordshire. Having thus anticipated Edward, he pulled off the mask, and sent deputies to that prince, demanding that he would without delay deliver up Eustace and his attendants to justice, and expel all the Normans from the kingdom; otherwise he would prosecute him with all the rigour of war. Edward, by this time, backed by the Mercian and Northumbrian forces, made a suitable reply to this treasonable declaration; and a civil war must have been the consequence, had not Siward and Leoffric prevented matters from being brought to extremity, and set on foot a negotiation, by which it was agreed that the disputes should be judicially determined before the assembly of the states at London. Mean while Edward's army was reinforced

from

from different quarters by all the nobility who hated Goodwin; and at the appointed time the earl's two sons marched to Southwark with a numerous body of West-Saxons; but their men deserting continually, they retired before the determination of their cause, and Goodwin and his five sons were condemned to banishment.

*Goodwin is banished.*

The earl himself, with Swein and Toston, retired to Flanders, while Harold and Leofwin took refuge in Ireland; and Edward, in order to satiate his revenge upon the whole family, not only bestowed their honours and employments upon other noblemen, but also confined the queen in the monastery of Warewell, after having stripped her of all her jewels and effects. Goodwin and his sons did not tamely bear their exile and disgrace; but finding means to equip a good number of ships at Bruges as well as in Ireland, their squadrons joined near Portland, and, sailing along shore, were reinforced all the way by soldiers from the country, and ships from the Cinque-ports, until entering the Thames, they advanced to London, where the king was provided with a strong fleet and army for their reception.

*Invades England with a strong fleet.*

But both sides consisting of English, they were unwilling to imbrue their hands in the blood of their countrymen; and the bishops and nobility again interposing, effected an accommodation. Goodwin and his sons obliged themselves to give hostages, to be kept in Normandy as pledges for their good behaviour, in consideration of being restored to their honours and estates; and the king consented that all foreigners should be expelled the kingdom. To this article Edward assented with great reluctance, at the pressing intreaties of Stigand bishop of Winchester, who, in a very little time, reaped the happy fruits of his success: for, immediately after this agreement, Robert archbishop of Canterbury retired

*An accommodation effected.*

A. C. 1052.

Malmesb.  
Ann. Sax.Edward  
visited by  
William,  
duke of  
Normandy.

A. C. 1053.

tired to Normandy; and, being banished by a sentence of the general assembly of the states, as an incendiary and principal cause of the late troubles, Stigand was promoted to his see. The queen was honourably released from her confinement: Goodwin was formally impeached by the king for the murder of his brother Alfred, and acquitted; his family were restored to all their dignities, and the earl became more powerful than ever. Swein, however, the most profligate libertine of his age, in order to expiate his guilt in the treacherous murder of his kinsman Beorn, undertook the voluntary penance of going barefoot as a pilgrim to the Holy Land, and was slain in his return by the Saracens.

The tranquillity of England being restored by this reconciliation, the king was visited by William the Bastard, duke of Normandy; during whose residence at the English court Edward took all opportunities of manifesting his gratitude for the favours and protection he owed to that prince in his adversity. It must have been at this juncture, that he made his will in favour of William, if any such deed ever existed; for it cannot be supposed to have been made during his residence in the Norman court, while his elder brother Alfred was alive, and the throne of England occupied, so that he must have had a very faint prospect of succeeding to the crown; it is not at all unlikely that Edward, who had no issue of his own, and very little affection for Edgar Atheling, the grandson of Edmund Ironside, and who in his heart detested Goodwin, should bequeath his throne to an active prince, his friend and kinsman, who would prevent its falling a prey to the exorbitant power of that haughty nobleman; yet no such will was ever produced, although William made it a pretence for seizing the English crown.

Good



A.C. 1053.

Goodwin  
dies sud-  
denly.

Flor. Wig.

A.C. 1054.

Ingulph.  
Chron.  
Petersb.

Goodwin's power increased every day to such a degree that his arrogance became quite insupportable, and the more grievous to Edward, as he had found means to banish from court every person in whom that weak prince reposed the least confidence. This tyranny however at last expired with the life of that imperious nobleman, who was suddenly deprived of the faculty of speech as he sat at dinner with the king at the palace of Oldiham; and being carried into an apartment of the palace, died in three days, during which he continued speechless and insensible. This was probably no other than an apoplectic fit, the effect of age and infirmity; though the monkish writers imputed it to the judgment of heaven, affirming that the king having dropped some hint of suspicion against the earl as an accomplice in the murder of Alfred, Goodwin exclaimed, "May this morsel be my last, if I was in any way accessary to the death of that prince." So saying, he endeavoured to swallow it, and was choaked. Thus died the most powerful subject that ever England saw. He was succeeded in all his honours and employments, including the stewardship of the household and governments of Kent, Suffex, and the West-Saxons, by his son Harold, who was obliged to resign his own government of the East-Saxons and Angles, to Alfgar the son of Leoffric. Thus, though Goodwin was no more, his power, interest, credit, and connexions, still survived in the person of Harold, who was not so proud, insolent, and haughty, as his father, and behaved to the king with appearance of respect and submission. By this conduct he hoped to efface the impressions of hatred which the king preserved against his family: but, nothing could conciliate the affection of Edward, who detested the son as much as he had ever hated the father, and dreaded him more, because Harold had made himself more

A.C. 1054.

Siward,  
count of  
Northum-  
berland,  
defeats  
Macbeth.

popular by his honest dealing and affability; for the same reason the king still wore the mask of dissimulation.

Timorous as this prince was in his disposition, he found himself so far happy, that his dominions were not exposed to the calamities of war, though he was not a little alarmed about this period, by Macbeth, usurper of the Scottish crown, who threatened to invade Cumberland. That bloody tyrant had murdered his lawful king Duncan, who had loaded him with favours, and now wanted to destroy that prince's son Malcolm Canmore, who possessed Cumberland, as eldest son and heir apparent of the king of Scotland. Macbeth having rendered himself odious to his subjects by his cruelty and oppression, the greatest part of the nobility solicited Malcolm in secret, to march against the usurper, and promised to declare for him as soon as he should cross the borders of the kingdom. This young prince had recourse to Edward, who supplied him with a strong body of forces, commanded by Siward earl of Northumberland; and they advanced against the usurper, who gave them battle, and was defeated after a very desperate engagement, in which Osborn the son of Siward lost his life. When the count understood that he was slain, he asked if his wounds were before; and being answered in the affirmative, "Well then" (said he) "I can give him a soldier's burial." Macbeth after this action retired to the Highlands, where he was deserted by his subjects, and at last taken and slain; so that Malcolm ascended his father's throne, without further opposition. Siward did not long survive this glorious expedition; he was that year seized with a distemper at York, which reduced him to the grave. When he found his end approaching, he called for his armour, which being buckled on, he said, "Thus should

A.C. 1055.

“ a

"a soldier die," and expired, as he stood upright, supported by his attendants.

A.C. 1055.  
Flor. Wig.

Alfgar is banished and makes a descent upon England,

Ingulph,

Sim. Dun.  
A.C. 1056,

Prince Edward arrives with his family from Hungary.

His government was bestowed upon Harold's brother Toston, by which the family of Goodwin gained a great accession of power; though Harold, not yet satisfied with his good fortune, projected the ruin of his own brother-in-law Alfgar, because he resented the king's conferring upon that nobleman the offices which he had formerly possessed. Alfgar's heat and indiscretion laid him open to the snares of Harold, by whose emissaries he was accused of holding a treasonable correspondence with the Welsh, and by a sentence of the states banished the kingdom. He retired into Ireland, where he found means to raise a body of forces, which he transported into Wales, where he was joined by Griffith prince of that country; and these associates, making an irruption into Herefordshire, defeated Raoul de Mantes, governor of that county: but they were afterwards routed by Harold, who of his own accord had assembled his vassals to check their progress. Upon this occasion he acted with great generosity, and employed his whole credit in procuring the pardon of Alfgar, who being restored to his estate and honours, was ever after firmly attached to the interest of his brother-in-law.

Harold's behaviour in this expedition, added to his insinuating manners, extended and increased his popularity to such a degree, that the people began already to talk of him as the most proper person to succeed the king upon the throne of England. Edward, aroused at these suggestions, and abhorring the thoughts of a successor from the family of Goodwin, sent for his nephew Edward from Hungary, and that prince arrived in England with his son Edgar Atheling, and his daughters Margaret and Christina. The appearance of a son of their

A. C. 1056. beloved Edmund Ironside, detached the English intirely from the interest of Harold, and united all their affection in favour of their own royal line; but prince Edward died soon after his arrival, leaving his pretensions to his son Edgar, who was too young, weak, and inactive, to avail himself of his title. The same year was distinguished by the death of Leoffric duke of Mercia, who was a nobleman possessed of many excellent qualities \*, and by his fidelity to Edward had served as a counterpoise to the power and ambition of Godwin's family. He was succeeded in his dukedom by his son Alfgar, through the interest of Harold, whose hopes of ascending the throne were now revived by the death of prince Edward.

Harold visits  
the duke of  
Normandy.

Whether this nobleman was desirous of engaging William duke of Normandy in his interest, not knowing the private agreement between king Edward and that duke, or that he wanted to effect the release of his brother Ulnoth and his nephew Hacun, who had been delivered as hostages for his father's good behaviour, and sent into Normandy, where they still resided; he resolved to make a voyage to the continent, and asked the king's permission to solicit the duke in person for the liberty of his relations, whom, as Edward pretended, he had refused to release. The king, though incessantly importuned on this subject, lent

\* No lady of the age was more celebrated for her beauty and virtue, than this nobleman's wife Godina, of whom it is reported, that in order to redeem the inhabitants of Coventry from a tax imposed by her husband, she undertook to ride naked through the city; such being the condition of their exemption, stipulated by the caprice of her lord. Accordingly, having first forbid the inhabitants on pain of

death to look at her in this procession, she mounted a horse, and rode through the town with no other covering than her long hair: one person was incited by his curiosity to have a peep for which he was immediately struck dead with lightening; and in memory of this event the citizens still retain a kind of statute on the spot, in the attitude of peeping.



a deaf ear to his intreaties, because he was afraid that Harold would, in a personal interview with William, discover the agreement he had made with that prince, relating to the succession, and embroil him with his own subjects at his return. Harold, finding the king inflexible, resolved to take that liberty which Edward would not grant, and embarked for Rouen, without giving the king the least intimation of his design; but he was driven by distress of weather into one of the ports of Picardy, and immediately arrested by order of the count de Ponthieu. In this emergency he wrote an account of his misfortunes to William duke of Normandy, who demanded him from the count in such a peremptory manner, that he was set at liberty, and proceeded to Rouen, where he was received with great hospitality; though the duke resolved to make his advantage of this visit. He took occasion to communicate to Harold his designs upon the crown of England, and the secret contract between Edward and him upon that subject; and as he was not ignorant of Harold's views, gave him to understand that he expected he would resign his pretensions. The earl, who had never suspected any such collusion between the king and the duke, finding himself in the power of the latter, thought proper to dissemble his sentiments; and after having owned with an appearance of candour, that he had once entertained such views before the arrival of prince Edward from Hungary, now faithfully promised to contribute his whole interest in behalf of William, whose daughter he demanded in marriage, as a proof of his attachment. The duke was extremely well pleased with his frank manner of deportment, though he obliged him to confirm his promise by oath, in presence of the states of Normandy and some holy relics, by which he imagined the obligation was rendered

A. C. 1056. inviolable: then he was betrothed to William's daughter, who was too young for the consummation of marriage, and they parted to all appearance extremely well satisfied with one another.

He was no sooner returned to England, however, than he forgot his oath, and redoubled his endeavours to baffle the designs of William, by taking all opportunities of increasing the national prejudice against the Normans; of strengthening his own party among the nobles; and of recommending himself more and more to the favour and affection of the people: while Edward, who plainly perceived his aim, took no pains to counteract his projects, having no connexions that he valued above his own peace and tranquillity, which he determined if possible to preserve.

Sim. Dun.  
M. West.

Reduces the  
Welsh.

Immediately after this transaction, Harold had occasion to fortify himself in the esteem of the English, by repelling the Welsh, who had renewed hostilities under their prince Griffith, and rendering them tributary to the crown of England. Nevertheless they seized the first opportunity of repeating their incursions: and after having ravaged the country, retired with their booty to mountains and fastnesses, which they deemed inaccessible to heavy-armed soldiers. Harold, seeing no end to these depredations, but in the destruction of the whole race, marched against them with a body of light-armed troops, which pursued them among their hills and ferretted them out of their retreats, while his cavalry scoured the plain country; so that the enemy finding themselves in danger of being utterly exterminated, slew their gallant prince Griffith, and sent his head to Harold, as a token of their submission: upon which they were forgiven, and acknowledged the authority of Blethynh and Raywallon, whom Edward appointed to rule over them.

Flor. Wig.  
Sim. Dun.

Nor was Harold's equity and moderation less conspicuous than his martial accomplishments. His brother Toston, count of Northumberland, having been expelled from his government by the people whom he had grievously oppressed, Harold was ordered to re-establish him and chastise the delinquents. He was met on the frontiers by a deputation from the Northumbrians, who assured him they had no intention to rebel, but had taken up arms merely to defend themselves from the cruelty and injustice of a rapacious governor; and at the same time they enumerated the grievances they had sustained from the tyranny of his brother, from which they appealed to his own conscience and the king's equity. Convinced of Toston's brutality, he sacrificed his affection to his duty, and not only represented the affair in its true colours to the king, but effected the confirmation of Morcar son to Alfgar duke of Mercia, whom the Northumbrians had elected for their governor. Mean while Toston retired in wrath to Flanders; after having committed an action which proves him to have been a monster of barbarity. He had always hated his brother Harold, whom he one day collared in the king's presence; but the conduct of that nobleman in this last affair had exasperated him to such a degree, that he seized some of his domestics, whom he ordered to be cut in pieces, salted, barrelled, and sent as a present to their master. The disgrace of Toston, far from weakening, effectually strengthened the interest of Harold, who not only became the idol of the people, from this last instance of integrity, but also reinforced his credit, by establishing his friend Morcar as duke of Northumberland, in the room of a worthless brother, upon whom he could not depend. He married Algetha sister of Morcar and Edwin duke of Mercia; so that these countries, together with his own duke-

His moderation and popularity.

Flor. Wig.  
Chron. Sax.

A. C. 1056.

Edward's  
death.

Ingulph.

Sim. Dun.

A. C. 1066.

dom of Wessex, being secured in his family, his influence and power extended over the whole kingdom.

While Harold, in this manner, took long strides towards the succession, Edward's attention was engrossed by the dedication of the cathedral at Westminster, which, together with an adjoining monastery, he built in the place where an old church had stood, that was founded by king Sabert, or rather converted into a christian church, from a temple in which the old Saxons had worshipped Apollo. That this ceremony might be performed in the most solemn manner, he convoked a general assembly of the states at London; and was taken dangerously ill before they were dismissed. He had made a vow to go on a pilgrimage to Rome; but as he afterwards found it inconvenient as well as disagreeable to his subjects to leave the kingdom, he obtained a dispensation from the pope, absolving him from this obligation; but he thought he could not employ the money he had raised for his journey to a better purpose than that of building the cathedral and monastery of Westminster, to which he granted, by charter, the privilege of a sanctuary and other valuable exemptions, which were confirmed by the assembly of the states; and the church was consecrated to St. Peter. This was the last transaction of Edward, whose indisposition had greatly increased before the consecration was finished; he then was confined to his bed, and lay in a delirium for three days, at the expiration of which he recovered the use of his reason; recommended his queen as a virgin to the good offices of the nobility; desired some provision might be made for the servants who had followed him from Normandy; and directed that his body should be buried in the new church of Westminster: then receiving the sacrament, he resigned his breath, in the four and twentieth year of his reign.

Thus



A. C. 1066.

His pacific  
character  
and indolence.

Thus died Edward, whose mental qualities did not at all answer to the dignity of his person. He was weak, indolent, and irresolute, and the attachment to his own ease tended in a great measure to the tranquillity of his reign; for had he been active in his resentment, the nation must have been exposed to the calamities of a civil war, from the measures he would have taken to gratify his hatred towards Goodwin and his family. He seems to have been void of natural affection, and indeed of every other passion that kindles any warm emotion in the human heart. He was equally free of pride and ostentation, moderate in his appetites, complacent in his deportment, charitable to the poor, and extremely punctual in the performance of all religious duties: so that he acquired among the vulgar the title of Saint and Confessor, by which epithet he was afterwards canonized. His continence, so much extolled by the monkish writers, seems to have been the effect of constitutional frigidity. His prophecies and revelations are no other than the dreams of superstition; and as for his curing scrophulous tumours and ulcers by the touch, the sensible part of mankind is by this time very well convinced that neither he who exercised this apostolical function, in imitation of the French kings, nor any of his successors, ever contributed to the recovery of one patient, by any inherent personal virtue derived from heaven. The passive humanity, or rather easiness of his disposition, appears from some private incidents of his life, which are very often more characteristical than those transactions of importance, which are the effects of counsel and deliberation. One day, while he reposed himself upon a couch, a page, who little dreamed that he was in the apartment, finding an iron chest open, filled his pockets with the silver it contained; but not satisfied with his first booty,

he

A. C. 1066.

he had recourse to it again; when the king thinking him perhaps too unconscionable, " Boy (said he very deliberately) you had better be satisfied with what you have got; for if Hugolin, my chamberlain, should come in, you will lose the whole, and be severely whipt into the bargain. " Another day being at the chace, in which he delighted, a forward peasant crossed the hounds and spoiled his diversion; upon which he rode up to the clown in a great passion, exclaiming, " By God's mother! fellow, I would be revenged on thee, were it in my power." Before the reign of Edward, the countries of Wesssex, Mercia, and Northumberland, were governed by their own peculiar laws: but he reduced them all into one body, and ordained they should be observed in common through the whole kingdom. These were called Edward's laws, in contradistinction to those of the Norman kings, which were introduced in the sequel.

Hunting.  
Malmesb.  
Hoveden.

## H A R O L D II.

Harold  
ascends the  
throne.

**H**AROLD had taken his precautions with such dexterity, that Edward's death was no sooner known, than the states, already assembled, unanimously elected him for their sovereign, without paying the least regard to Edgar Atheling, the heir by blood, or to William duke of Normandy, whose pretensions they did not seem to know, as they were not publicly declared. There is great disagreement among the authors who have writ the history of this period, touching the manner in which Harold ascended the throne. Some alledge that the citizens of London, with Harold at their head, visited Edward in his last moments, and extorted his nomination of this earl, even after he declared that he had already appointed William duke of

Nor-

Normandy, for his successor; and others affirm, <sup>A. C. 1066.</sup> that after Edward's death finding there was a dispute among the nobles about the succession, he seized the crown, which he placed upon his own head, and intimidated the assembly to such a degree, that they gave their suffrages unanimously in his favour.

Harold, being crowned, began his reign with many popular acts of government. He paid great deference to the clergy, without shutting his eyes to the irregularities of that order, severely chastising the guilty, while he bestowed marks of his favour upon the innocent, by confirming their charters, and extending their immunities. He took the most effectual measures for an impartial administration of justice: ordered the laws to be revised and reformed, and exemplary punishment to be inflicted on robbers and disturbers of the public peace, who had thriven under the lenity of the late reign; and lastly, he made preparations for defending his territories from invasion and insult.

His gentle  
administra-  
tion.

He created Edgar Atheling, earl of Oxford, cultivated the old nobility with kindness and veneration, eased the people of their taxes, and took such pains to secure their property by wholesome regulations, that there was no danger of his authority's being shaken by domestic troubles.

These precautions were the more necessary, as he was not only threatened with a descent by William duke of Normandy, but likewise exposed to the machinations of his own brother Tostig, who resolved to disturb his enjoyment of the new dignity he had acquired. That headstrong implacable exile, being furnished with some ships by his father-in-law the count of Flanders, landed in the Isle of Wight, which he laid under contribution. Then he pillaged the coast until he arrived in Lincolnshire, where he was encountered by Edwin and Morcar, who routed his troops, and obliged him to take refuge

A. C. 1066. *fuge in Scotland, in hope of being joined by Harold Harfager king of Norway, whom William duke of Normandy had instigated to ravage the English coast, and keep the king in play, until he should have completed the armament which he was then preparing to assert his title to the English crown.*

*William  
duke of  
Normandy,  
demands the  
crown.*

The duke of Normandy, though well informed of all these popular transactions of Harold, would not desist from the enterprize he had projected, but carried on his preparations with unremitting vigour; and in the mean time, to give some colour of justice to his attempt, he sent ambassadors to demand that Harold would relinquish the crown in his favour, and to denounce war in case of a refusal. To this peremptory demand Harold replied, that William had no sort of right to the crown of England; for, granting that the late king had disposed of it in his favour, such a disposition (if any such there was) could not take place, inasmuch as it was diametrically opposite to the laws of the kingdom, which restricted kings from bestowing their crowns according to their own caprice, especially to strangers. With respect to himself, he had been fairly elected by those who had a right to confer the sovereignty; nor could he yield the crown to any other, without betraying the confidence reposed in him by his subjects. As to the oath, which he accused him of having violated, it was extorted from him by compulsion, while he was in the power of the duke; and therefore null and void, according to the law of nations. Finally, he gave him to understand, that he knew how to defend his right against any person by whom he should be invaded: an answer that referred the dispute to the determination of war, for which both parties prepared with the utmost diligence,

*Badmer.  
Mat. Paris.*

Duke



Duke William, in order to raise the sums necessary for defraying the expence of such an important enterprize, convoked an assembly of the Norman states, of whom he demanded subsidies. But they refused to comply with his proposals, on pretence that Normandy was already exhausted of men and money by the late wars; and that they were not obliged to serve in foreign expeditions, in which the interest of Normandy was not immediately concerned. William, disappointed in this quarter, was advised to borrow money of particular persons; and this method succeeded beyond his wish. The individuals among the noblemen and merchants seemed to vie with each other in contributing towards the armament; and among others, William Fitzosborne undertook to equip forty vessels at his own expence. At the same time he had recourse to some of the neighbouring princes, who advanced money on the contingency of having lands assigned to them, at the conquest of England; and in order to give the greater sanction to his undertaking, he obtained the approbation of the pope, by promising to hold the kingdom as a fief of the holy see. That pontiff not only provided him with a consecrated standard, but also issued a bull, excommunicating all those who should attempt to interrupt the duke in the execution of his design. Howsoever the pope's approbation might operate in his behalf, by removing the scruples of the Normans, and animating them to exert their whole power for the success of the expedition, it seemed to have no effect upon the subjects of Harold, who prepared a powerful navy, and assembled a numerous body of forces to cover his kingdom from the threatened invasion: but being unwilling to burthen his people with unnecessary expence, after having waited several months for William's arrival, and received intelligence

A. C. 1066  
William  
makes preparations  
for invading  
England.

A, C. 1066. ligence that he had postponed his embarkation to the spring, he unrigged his fleet, and disbanded his army.

The king of Norway lands in Northumberland, and is defeated.

It was at this juncture that the politic Norman engaged the king of Norway to make a diversion in his favour, by invading the north of England. Accordingly, Harfager arrived with a fleet of two hundred sail at the mouth of the Humber, where he was reinforced by Toston, and sailing up the river, they landed and laid waste the country of Yorkshire. The earls of Mercia and Northumberland assembled a body of raw undisciplined troops to oppose their progress; but they were routed at Fulford, and York fell a prey to the enemy. Mean while Harold being apprised of Harfager's descent, began his march at the head of a royal army to check the career of the invaders; and the two armies meeting near Standford-bridge, since known by the name of Battle-bridge, a furious engagement ensued, in which Harfager and Toston were killed, and almost all their forces cut in pieces. Those who escaped owed their safety to the personal prowess of a brave Norwegian, who singly defended a bridge over the Derwent, for three hours, against the whole English army, during which time he slew forty of their best men with his battle-ax, until he was slain by an arrow. Harold, pursuing his victory, made himself master of a great many Norwegian ships that lay in the river Ouse; and at last consented to an accommodation with Olave, the son of Harfager, and Paul, count of the Orkneys, who were permitted to retire with twenty ships, in consideration of restoring the booty they had gained, and paying as much silver as twelve strong men could carry.

Sim. Dun.  
Camden,  
Yorkshire.

The fame of this victory did not contribute so much to the confidence which his subjects reposed in his valour and capacity, as his unseasonable parsimony

simony hurt him in the opinion of his army : for<sup>A. C. 1066.</sup> he reserved to himself the whole booty, which was very considerable, with a view to convert it to the maintenance of the war against the Norman ; and though this was a laudable design, formed in favour of his subjects, whom he was loth to burthen, it produced great dissatisfaction among his troops, a great number of whom deserted the service.

While he was thus employed in the North, duke William set sail from St. Valery, towards the latter end of September ; and after a short passage arrived at Pevensey in Suffex, where, leaping ashore from the boat, he fell on his face, a circumstance which might have dispirited his followers, considering the superstition of the times, had not one of his soldiers converted it into a good omen, by saying aloud, in a jocosè manner, “ See how the duke takes possession of England.” As that part of the country was quite unfurnished of troops, he met with no opposition in landing ; so that he fortified his camp at his leisure, and then sent back his ships to Normandy, that his followers might have no resource but in their valour. After having refreshed his men at this place, he advanced along the sea-side to Hastings, where he ordered a fort to be built, and published a manifesto, containing the motives that induced him to undertake the enterprize. He said, he came to revenge the death of prince Alfred, restore the archbishop of Canterbury, and assist the English in punishing Harold, who had seized the crown to which he had no right, in direct violation of the oath he had sworn at the Norman court. But, he made not the least mention of Edward’s will, which might have had some small weight among the people ; whereas the reasons he assigned were so frivolous, that no Englishman would enlist under his banner. Nevertheless, he forbade his people, under severe penalties, to ravage

The Norman lands in Suffex, and publishes a manifesto.

A. C. 1066. vage the country, or insult the inhabitants, whom he affected to consider as his own subjects.

Harold  
marches  
against him.

Harold was at York when he received the news of this invasion, and forthwith began his march for London, where, upon reviewing his army, he found it very much diminished by the battle with the Norwegians, and the subsequent desertion: but, all the nobility had assembled about his person, to offer their services on such an interesting occasion. While he remained in this city, waiting for some troops that were on the march to join him from different parts of the country, William sent ambassadors to him with another insolent message, demanding he would surrender the crown which he had so perfidiously usurped; and Harold retorted his arrogance by another embassy of the same nature, to which the duke made no answer. The English monarch having assembled all his forces, advanced against the Norman army, and encamped within seven miles of Hastings, where they were posted. While they remained at such a small distance from each other, on the eve of a decisive battle, the spies of Harold brought such a report of the strength and discipline of the Normans, that the principal officers of the English army began to doubt of their success. And Harold's brother Gurth advised the king to defer the battle: representing that the Normans would be distressed by the delay, and in all probability obliged to leave the kingdom, at the approach of winter; whereas the English army would daily increase: but, if he was determined to risk an engagement, he intreated Harold to retire, that in case the troops should be defeated, he might be in a condition to attack the victors with a fresh body of forces. The king rejected this advice with disdain, declaring, he would, by his personal behaviour, convince his subjects he was worthy of the crown they had set upon his head.

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A. C. 1066.

head; and affirming that the Normans were not more formidable than the Norwegians, whom he had so lately conquered.

The duke of Normandy perceiving that Harold was determined to give him battle, advanced a little way, and took post in an advantageous situation, where he could have room to draw up his army in order of battle; and at this juncture he abated a little of his former pride and ferocity. Conscious of the greatness of that stake which he was going to hazard, he sent a monk to Harold, offering to refer their dispute to the determination of the pope; to quit the kingdom, provided he would do him homage for the crown; or to decide the quarrel in single combat. To these propositions Harold replied, that he was not so simple as to submit to the arbitration of the pope, who had already declared himself a party; that he scorned to hold the crown of England dependent on any prince whatever: nor would he put his kingdom on the issue of a single combat, in which, though he should obtain the victory, he could reap no solid advantage. He therefore told the messenger that God would next day decide between him and his adversary.

The duke offers him an alternative, which he rejects.

That night was spent in feasting and mirth by the English, who seemed confident of success; while the Normans were employed in prayer and preparation for the battle. Next day, being the fourteenth of October, and the anniversary of Harold's birth, both armies appeared fronting each other, in order of battle. The vanguard of the English was composed of Kennsmen, in consequence of a privilege they enjoyed since the beginning of the Saxon heptarchy; and Harold commanded the main body on foot, as much exposed as the meanest of his soldiers. The Normans were formed in three lines, the first of which was commanded by Montgomery and Fitzosborne; Geof-

A. C. 1065. frey Martel conducted the second; and the duke headed the body of reserve, that he might occasionally sustain those who should need his assistance. The number of the Normans amounted to sixty thousand, including the archers and a strong body of cavalry armed cap-a-pee. The English were not so numerous, and consisted mostly of infantry armed with the target, battle-ax, spear, and scymitar.

The Normans begin the attack at the battle of Hastings.

The Normans began the battle, advancing while they sung the ballad of Rollo, and letting fly a shower of arrows, which discomposed the English, who were not accustomed to such missiles; nevertheless, they immediately closed their files, and gave the Normans such a warm reception, that they were obliged to retire a little and take breath. They repeated the attack, but could make no impression upon the English phalanx; and, in a word, the battle was fought with equal valour on both sides, from seven in the morning till the afternoon, before an inch of ground was lost or won on either side, notwithstanding the various efforts and undaunted courage of both chiefs, who exhibited repeated proofs of martial conduct, and animated their men by their presence, admonition, and example. At length William put in practice a stratagem to which his army had been regularly trained. He ordered a retreat to be sounded, and immediately his lines gave way, with such appearance of confusion, that the English believing them routed, forsook their ranks, and pursued with equal impetuosity and disorder. The duke of Normandy seeing their impentable column broke into small detachments dispersed about the field, ordered another signal to be made, at sight of which his men formed again in an instant, and, surrounding the detached bodies of the English, made a terrible slaughter. Harold, enraged to see the victory thus wrested from his

8 grasp,



*The King*  
Harman d.



*The Battle of Hastings with the Death of Harold  
King of Britain, which decided the Conquest of England  
by William Duke of Normandy.*

Lawman delin.

Grignon sculp.



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grasp, ran about the field with the utmost agility, rallying his men and reducing them to order, and at length took possession of a rising-ground, where he was joined by such a number of the fugitives, that he soon found himself in a condition to make head against the enemy. The Normans advanced to attack them, and were repulsed. Had Harold taken this opportunity of retiring, he might have saved himself and the greatest part of his army, and, in all probability, the Normans would have been glad to make peace on equal terms : but, he could not bear the disgrace of leaving the field of battle to his adversary, and resolved to maintain his post till next day, when he would try his fortune in another engagement.

William perceiving the night approaching, and unwilling to leave the battle undecided, made another desperate effort to dislodge the English, and in this attack Harold was shot dead with an arrow that pierced his brain. His troops seeing their gallant leader fall, were overwhelmed with consternation and despair, and fled immediately with the utmost precipitation; while the Norman horse pursuing as long as they could see their way, made a terrible slaughter, without granting quarter to a single man. Yet a good part of the English army, favoured by the darkness, was saved by the conduct of Morcar and Edwin, who had fought with great courage, until the king and his two brothers were slain; and then seeing the troops broken and dispirited, had yielded to the fortune of the day. In this long and bloody engagement, which decided the fate of England, the victor lost six thousand men; but a much greater number of the vanquished were slain. William having thus attained the accomplishment of his wish, ordered his whole army to kneel and return thanks to heaven for the victory they had obtained : then he directed a tent to be pitched in the

Harold is  
slain, and  
his army  
defeated.

A. C. 1066.

middle of the slain, and there he passed the remaining part of the night. In the morning his soldiers were employed in burying their dead countrymen, while the peasants of the neighbourhood were permitted to perform the same office to the English, who had lost their lives in the battle. Harold's body was so mangled and defaced that it could not be discovered, until a lady, whom he had kept as a mistress, distinguished it by some private mark, known to herself alone. Being thus recognized, it was sent, together with the bodies of his brothers Gurth and Lewin, to their mother Githa, by whom they were honourably interred in the abbey of Waltham, which Harold himself had founded \*.

Sim. Dun.  
Ingulph.  
Flor. Wig.  
Chron. Pet.  
Hist. Eliens.

Thus died Harold II. in defence of English liberty, against the usurpation of foreign power; and if we except the injury he did to Edgar Atheling, in excluding that young prince from the throne of his fathers, he seems to have been, in all respects, well qualified to wield the sceptre with reputation to himself and happiness to his subjects; for he was humane, affable, intelligent, and his generosity was equal to his extraordinary courage. His death put an end to the dominion of the Anglo-Saxons in England, after it had continued above six hundred years, since the reign of Hengist, the first king of Kent.

\* During the battle, which was fought near Heathfield, in Sussex, at a place since called Battel, the duke of Normandy had three horses killed under him; and was frequently in manifest hazard of his life. Being informed that an officer had thrust his sword into the dead body of Harold, he ordered him to be cashiered immediately for the barbarous insult, and sent the body of that prince to his mother, without ransom.

## OF THE CHURCH.

**E**GBERT having united the Heptarchy was so engrossed by continual wars, that he had very little time to advert to ecclesiastical affairs ; and indeed these troubles detached the people so much from the practice and study of religious duties, that the whole nation was overspread with ignorance, and a total relaxation of morals ensued. During this reign, however, Withlaf, the tributary king of Mercia, granted to the abbey of Croyland a famous charter, which was confirmed by the states of the kingdom. Among other privileges and exemptions contained in this charter, it ordained that the monastery of Croyland should be held as a sanctuary, which no officer of justice should presume to violate, on pain of losing his right foot ; and that the abbot and monks should be entertained through all parts of Mercia, with all the honours and distinction due to a prince of the blood. This deed was confirmed by Egbert, and seems to have been the only ecclesiastical transaction of his reign : but his successor Ethelwulf, who was entirely governed by the clergy, and left the administration to Swithin, bishop of Winchester, extended his complaisance to the church farther than it had ever been carried by any of his predecessors ; and as we have hinted in the history of his reign, bestowed upon it the tythes of all England, in an authentic charter confirmed in a general assembly at Winchester, and signed by the substituted kings of Mercia and East-Anglia.

The reigns of Ethelbald, Ethelbert, and Ethelred I. are very barren of all ecclesiastical matter, except the destruction of monasteries by the Danes, which the historians of those days have described in

Famous  
charter  
granted to  
the abbey  
of Croyland.

Spel. Conc.  
Alfred re-  
stores the  
institution  
of monas-  
teries.

very pathetic terms: regretting in particular the three famous convents of Croyland, Ely, and Maderhamstede, in which the monks were massacred and their libraries burned. We have already observed that the cruelty of the Danes was so inveterate against every person appertaining to the culture of the christian religion, that those few monks who escaped their barbarity, either quitted the kingdom, or had recourse to other employments for a livelihood, when they found themselves deprived of the revenues upon which they formerly subsisted; so that Alfred the Great, when he triumphed over those invaders, could find no monks in England, and was obliged to replenish the monasteries he built with ecclesiastics invited from foreign countries. This great prince, who contributed so much to the restoration of learning and religion, enacted ecclesiastical as well as civil institutions. The first part of these is little more than a transcript of the Decalogue, omitting the second commandment, because repugnant to image-worship, which had by this time gained footing in England. These are followed by an abridgment of the regulations instituted by Moses, as recorded in the book of Exodus; and a recapitulation of the Gospel-dispensation: after which we find a short introduction to his code of civil laws, collected from those of Ina, Offa, and Ethelbert, the first of all the Saxon kings who were converted to Christianity.

Johnson's  
Canons.

Account of  
Johannes  
Scotus Eri-  
gena, Grim-  
bald, Asser  
Menevensis,  
and other  
eminent  
men.

Among those learned strangers who assisted Alfred in his great work of restoring the lustre of the church, and reviving the arts and sciences, the principal were these: Johannes Scotus Erigena, an Irish Scot, who had studied at Athens, and in other foreign countries, and made himself master of the Greek and Oriental tongues. He then repaired through Italy to France, where he acquired an eminent degree of favour and familiarity with Charles  
the



the Bald; and the fame of his talents extending to England, he was invited hither by Alfred, whom he instructed in the liberal arts, and whose friendship he enjoyed notwithstanding his opposition to the doctrine of transubstantiation, which rendered him obnoxious to the see of Rome. Towards the latter G. Malmesb. part of his life he opened a school in the monastery of Malmesbury, where his scholars murdered him with their penknives, though we are ignorant of the occasion. Another foreigner, for whom Alfred conceived a very early affection, was one Grimbald, who entertained him so hospitably in his journey to Rome, that he afterwards created him abbot of Winchester. He was a learned divine, well skilled in music, and distinguished himself for his talents in oratory. The first abbot of the new abbey, founded in the isle of Athelney, was a native of old Saxony, and almost all the monks, priests, and deacons, were foreigners. Not but that his own country produced a number of men, who distinguished themselves by their piety and erudition; namely, Affer Menevensis, a monk of St. Davids, so attached to his retirement, that all the caresses and favours of Alfred could not prevail upon him to forsake it entirely, though he consented to live one half year with the king, who promoted him to the bishopric of Sherburn, and bestowed upon him many other marks of his particular regard: yet, he must not be confounded with his namesake and uncle Afferius, archbishop of St. Davids, who wrote part of Alfred's life. John, the monk, belonging to the same monastery, to whose instruction the king owed his knowledge of the Latin tongue. Werefred, bishop of Worcester, who had been driven by the Danes into banishment, from whence he was recalled by Alfred, who employed him to translate Gregory's dialogues. Plegmund, archbishop of Canterbury, and Dunwulf, bishop

The great  
reputation  
of Neotus,  
otherwise  
St. Neot.

of Winchester, who is said by some authors to have been the very cowherd whom Alfred served in disguise : that prince it seems discovered in him a genius far above his station in life, which he exalted in proportion to his merit.

But of all the ecclesiastics who dignified the court of Alfred, Neotus, or St. Neot was the most remarkable for his learning, piety, and example. In being descended from the blood royal of the East-Angles, he was respected as a prince as well as a prelate ; and is said, by his personal authority and admonitions, to have restricted the follies of Alfred's youth. He was buried at St. Guerer's church, at Gainsbury in Cornwall ; and such, by that time, was the general opinion of his sanctity, that he supplanted the Cornish saint, and gave his own name to the church, which was thenceforward called Neotstow. The palace of earl Alric, in Huntingdonshire, was afterwards converted into a monastery, and dedicated to this saint, whose body was translated thither ; though not suffered to remain in this place neither : for, in the reign of king John, his bones were removed from this St. Neot's to the abbey of Croyland. This ecclesiastic, and the greatest part of those abovementioned, taught together in the university of Oxford, which was regulated and endowed by Alfred, who frequently assisted in person at their exercises, until some disputes arose between the native and foreign professors, and then Grimbald retired to the monastery at Winchester, which the king had lately founded.

Camden.

Odo's rise  
and cha-  
racter.

Alfred's successor Edward imitated the virtues of his father, in founding the university of Cambridge, as well as in a number of benefactions to the church : yet his reign is remarkable for a very particular exertion of the authority of the Roman see. Pope Formosus, being informed that the bishopric of Wessex had been seven years vacant,

sent,

sent over a bull, excommunicating the king and all his subjects, which being publicly read at a general assembly of the states, by Plegmund, archbishop of Canterbury, the vacant sees were immediately filled, and three new bishoprics erected in Wessex. *G. Malmes.* Then Plegmund set out for Rome, where the sentence was revoked, and at his return to England, he consecrated seven prelates in one day: Plegmund was succeeded in the see of Canterbury by Athelm, bishop of Wells, who crowned Athelstan at Kingston upon Thames; and during the reign of this prince was held the synod of Greatly, in which, besides the political constitutions already mentioned, Athelstan ordained, that all his own domains should pay tythes to the church; and a poor Englishman be maintained from the product of every two farms in his possession. After the death of Athelstan, Odo, bishop of Sherburn, was promoted to the see of Canterbury. He was a Dane by extraction, though born in East-Anglia, and disinherited by his parents on account of his attachment to the christian religion. His sufferings recommended him to the protection of a nobleman called Adhelm, who persuaded him to take orders; and by his interest he was raised to the see of Sherburn. Edmund, the successor of Athelstan, importuned him to accept of the archbishopric of Canterbury, which, however he for some time refused from a scruple of conscience, believing that translations were unlawful. When this objection was removed, by producing the example of Miletus and Justus, he was seized with a more ridiculous qualm, supposing no person but a monk could be qualified for an archbishopric; so that the king was obliged to send commissaries to France, to prevail upon the abbot of Fleury to admit him into his society. After his elevation, this bigotted priest published a body of canons, in which he denounces

ex-

excommunication against all violators of the church's property and exemptions; declares that those who refuse to obey the discipline of the church, are more wicked than the foldiers who crucified Christ; that it is the duty of kings, princes, and other persons in authority, to obey with great humility the archbishops and bishops, who keep the keys of heaven, and possess the power of binding and loosing; and that all the laity should be scrupulously exact in paying the tythes to the clergy.

Dunstan's  
origin and  
ambition.

Spel. Conc.

In the reign of Edmund, a great synod was convoked at London, in which bishops were enjoined to repair their churches, and the king required to establish funds for their support. In the course of the following year, another assembly enacted constitutions for the advancement of the christian religion, and the maintenance of concord among the people. Here also churches and royal palaces were made places of sanctuary; and it was ordained that no mulct for breaking the peace, or satisfaction for murder, should be forgiven. About this period the famous Dunstan began to signalize himself in the church and state. He was by birth a West-Saxon, descended of a noble family, and educated at Glastonbury, under a learned Irish monk, who instructed youth in that monastery. Having made extraordinary progress in his studies, he was recommended by Adhelm, archbishop of Canterbury, to king Athelstan, who took him under his protection, but no sooner perceived his ambitious views and meddling disposition, than he discarded him from his court. It was then that Dunstan retired in disgust from the world, and conceived that affection for the monks which he so cordially expressed in the whole course of his future grandeur. Edmund at his accession to the throne, invited him from his retreat, and made him his confessor; but he was for some misdemeanour dismissed from this office,



office, which however he regained by dint of interest, and acquired amazing influence under this monarch and his brother Edred. The monastic life was at the same time dignified by an illustrious member in the person of Turketyl, who was an excellent soldier and sound politician, and quitted the office of chancellor to embrace the life of a recluse, at Croyland, of which he was made abbot, after having received the habit, together with the episcopal benediction and pastoral staff. He was no sooner established in this ecclesiastical office, than he resigned the monastery, with all its deeds to Edred, who afterwards restored them to Turketyl, and his monks, in a full assembly of the states at London, when he exempted them from all service and incumbrances, and confirmed all the former privileges of the monastery, except that of its being a sanctuary, which the abbot wisely refused.

Dunstan being promoted to the archbishopric of Canterbury, exerted all his power and influence to re-establish the monks in possession of the monasteries which were occupied by the secular clergy; and if Edred had lived a little longer, he would probably have accomplished his aim: but that prince dying before he could wholly execute his project, his successor Edwy frustrated all his endeavours, and not only stripped the monks of their benefices, but also expelled them from the monasteries of Abbingdon and Malmesbury. We have already observed how the clamour raised by the monks on this occasion, cost Edwy the best part of his dominions; and mentioned the steps which were taken in the succeeding reign by Dunstan, to expel the secular priests, in their turn, on pretence that they did not lead a life of celibacy, according to the institutions of the councils and see of Rome. Yet, notwithstanding all his credit and eagerness of affection for the monks, it was not in his power to re-

Dunstan's  
affection for  
the monks.

re-establish them in the monasteries of the North, which had been deserted above two hundred years; insomuch that the order was scarce known in the province of Northumberland.

A body of  
canons pub-  
lished.

In the reign of Edward a body of canons was composed from the capitularies of Charlemagne, providing for the punctual payment of tythes and Peter-pence, the observation of Sunday, and the punishment of corrupt judges. These were followed by another set, by which it appears that priests took young students to serve a kind of clerkship, before they were admitted to holy orders; for, one of the canons forbids any priest to take a student without the consent of his former tutor. There is another, obliging every priest to learn some occupation, as an handicraftsman: and the rest enjoin all ecclesiastics to learn the creed and pater-noster; to have the host always in readiness, and burn it carefully when it grows stale, so as that the ashes may be put under the altar. There is likewise a prohibition against the marriage of priests; a strong injunction upon all christians to abstain from eating blood; and the collection concludes with penitentiary canons, by which it appears, that delinquents were allowed either to buy off their penance, or do it by proxy.

Oswald, bishop of Worcester, being preferred to the see of York, invited several foreign monks to settle in England, twelve of whom he sent to Ramsey, in Huntingdonshire, where Alvin, duke of East-Anglia, had founded a religious house; and among other immunities, specified in the charter, that no bishop should demand any entertainment, or exact any contribution from the monks of that society. At the death of Edgar, we have seen how the ejected secular clergy renewed their claims under Alfgar duke of Mercia, who drove the monks from their possessions in his government, while

while they were supported by another party of the nobility in the interest of Dunstan. In the course of this contest several councils were assembled, at which an Irish bishop called Beornelm, undertook the cause of the secular priests, and offered to dispute in public on the subject: but Dunstan declined the challenge, on pretence that he was old and infirm; and that it would be impious to admit any dispute on a subject, which had been determined by the miraculous interposition of heaven; for, as we have formerly observed, a crucifix was heard to speak in favour of the monks; and now this decision was confirmed by the terrible accident of the house's falling down, on which occasion Dunstan and his associates are said to have remained unhurt.

Beornelm  
espouses the  
cause of the  
secular  
clergy  
against  
Dunstan.

Osborne vit.  
Sancti Dun-  
stan.

Dunstan was succeeded by Ethelgar, originally a monk of Glastonbury; and after him the archbishop's see was occupied by Siricius from the same seminary, who had before been preferred to the see of Ramsbury, in Wiltshire. This is the prelate whose memory is branded for having advised king Ethelred to purchase a peace of the Danes; though it must be observed that no part of the Danegeld was levied by the clergy. Under the reign of this prince, a mission was sent from England, at the request of Aulaf king of Norway, to convert his subjects and the Swedes to the christian religion. The chiefs of this mission were Sigisfrid archbishop of York, Eschil, Barnard, and Gotibald: the first was made bishop of Wexca, in East Gothland, where he died after a series of successful labours, in propagating the gospel. Barnard baptized king Aulaf; Eschil is enrolled in the English martyrology; and Gotibald, after having been created a bishop, lost his life in Sweden.

A mission  
sent to con-  
vert the  
Swedes and  
Norwegians.

Alfric archbishop of Canterbury was succeeded by Alfage, who was of noble extraction, and had been

been

St. Alfsge  
is murdered  
by the  
Danes.

been a monk of Deerhurst in Gloucestershire; he was afterwards abbot of a society at Bath, from which, by the favour of Dunstan, he was preferred to the see of Winchester, which he possessed about two and twenty years. Before his elevation to the see of Canterbury, the fame of his sanctity had spread all over Europe; so that when he went to Rome for the pall, the pope received him with uncommon marks of esteem and affection. While he possessed the archbishopric, several councils were held, consisting of temporal and ecclesiastical powers, assembled to remedy the disorders both in church and state. We have already related the catastrophe of this prelate, who was barbarously murdered by the Danes, because he either could not or would not pay the exorbitant ransom they demanded; however he by his death acquired a place in the martyrology; and was succeeded in the see of Canterbury by Living, formerly bishop of Wells, who was taken and maltreated by the Danes, from whom he escaped, after a confinement of seven months, and retired to the continent, where he remained until the troubles had subsided. His successor was Agelnoth surnamed the Good, son of Agilsper, and abbot of Canterbury, at the time of his predecessor's decease. He had great weight and influence with king Canute, who owed great part of his popularity to the archbishop's advice. A great many ecclesiastical laws were enacted in this prince's reign for the honour and advantage of the church; in particular, a body compiled and enacted at Winchester, confirming, in the strongest terms, the respect due to sanctuaries, and empowering priests to purge themselves of all crimes laid to their charge, by saying mass and taking the sacrament, though the evidence against them should be never so strong.

Agel-



Agelnoth was a prelate of equal piety and fortitude; for, at the accession of Harold Harefoot, he flatly and resolutely refused to perform the ceremony of that prince's coronation, declaring that he had promised to Canute, that he would crown no prince but the posterity of Emma: he therefore set the diadem on the altar, and denounced the vengeance of heaven upon any prelate who should place it on the head of Harold. At his death the archbishopric was bestowed upon Eadsius, Harold's chaplain, who afterwards crowned Edward the Confessor, and instructed that prince in the knowledge of the English laws and constitution.

Agelnoth resolutely refuses to crown Harold Harefoot.

G. Malmesb.

Whatever pains he might have taken with his royal pupil, he could not persuade him to comply with the character and genius of the English nation; for, not contented with introducing the manners, customs, and language, of the Normans, he preferred Robert, one of his Norman followers, to the see of Canterbury; and two other chaplains successively to the bishopric of London. By which partiality he involved himself in such perplexity and distress, that he was fain to purchase his own ease by suffering these foreigners to be expelled: but, before this expulsion, one Herman, a Fleming, being promoted to the see of Wilton, was not contented with this provision, but a vacancy happening in the abbey of Malmesbury, solicited the king for its being added to his bishopric; and the king granted his request, together with an order importing that the abbey should be dissolved in three days. One of the monks being apprised of this decree, implored the patronage of earl Godwin, who was pleased with an opportunity to oppose foreign influence at court. He therefore represented to Edward the injustice of his order, and desired he would forthwith recal his grant: Edward dreading his resentment, and perhaps convinced

Edward's complaisance to foreigners.

vinced by his remonstrance, immediately complied with his request; and the Fleming left England in great displeasure. But, not relishing the austerities of a monastic life, which he had in his passion embraced, he returned to England during Goodwin's disgrace, and prevailed upon Edward to unite the sees of Ramsbury and Sherburn in his favour.

Edward is  
absolved of  
his vow by  
the pope.

When Robert, with all the rest of the foreigners, were expelled, the see of Canterbury devolved to Stigand, which he held without resigning the bishopric of Winchester, already in his possession. He had been formerly bishop of Elman, in Norfolk, and ejected in consequence of a quarrel with one Grimkettle; but he found means to retrieve his interest, and be established in the see of Selfey, while his brother Ethelmar was made bishop of the East-Angles. At this period a revolution happened in the see of Crediton in Devonshire, which was removed to Exeter, under a Lorrainer called Leoffric, a man of great learning and quality, who was highly honoured and esteemed by Edward and his queen. He ejected all the monks from the monasteries of St. Peter, and in their room introduced canons, who eat together at one table, slept in one apartment, and were provided with food and raiment by a steward of the bishop's appointing. King Edward being disquieted with some scruples, touching a vow he had made in his distress to visit Rome, which the kingdom was very averse to his performing; he, by the advice of his council, sent Alured bishop of Worcester with an embassy to the pope, desiring that his holiness would quiet his conscience, by absolving him of the vow, as the welfare of his subjects did not permit him to undertake the journey in person. Leo IX. who then filled the papal chair, hearing the circumstances explained, complied with the king's request; but

by way of commutation, enjoined him to distribute in alms a sum equal to what he might have expended in his journey; and to found a new monastery, the charter of which he confirmed beforehand. Mean while Egilric resigned the see of Durham to his brother Egilwin. He found a great treasure in laying the foundation of a church dedicated to St. Cuthbert; and was so enriched by this accident, that he laid aside his episcopal function, and amused himself in carrying on works of convenience for the emolument of the country.

Edward, on occasion of consecrating the church and abbey of Westminster, which he undertook by the pope's advice, resolved to send another embassy to Rome, for the confirmation of the privileges bestowed upon this new foundation. The persons nominated for this service were Aldred archbishop of York, Goodwin's son Tofton, Giso bishop of Wells, and Walter bishop of Hereford. Pope Nicholas II. received all these deputies with great honour, except Aldred, who holding the sees of York and Worcester together; without any dispensation from the pope, was tried and convicted of simony, and divested of his character and jurisdiction. The ambassadors being dismissed by his holiness, had scarce lost sight of Rome, when they were set upon and robbed by banditti: a circumstance which obliged them to return to the city, that they might be equipped anew for their journey. Tofton took this opportunity of demanding that the pope would indemnify him for the damage he had sustained. Finding no redress, he gave his holiness to understand, that he suspected him of being concerned in the robbery; and would therefore, at his return to England, prevail upon the king to stop the payment of Peter-pence, until he and his fellow-travellers should be reimbursed.

Sends an  
embassy to  
Rome.

Pope Nicholas restores Aldred to the see of York.

Nicholas, startled at this declaration, offered to compromise the affair; and, in order to appease the clamour of Tofton, agreed that Aldred should be restored to his dignity, and even receive the pall as archbishop of York, provided he would resign the see of Worcester. The proposal was embraced, the accommodation effected, and Nicholas sent two legates to assist Aldred in consecrating Wulfstan bishop of Worcester; because Stigand archbishop of Canterbury was looked upon as an usurper by the see of Rome, inasmuch as he had taken possession during the life of Robert the Norman, and not yet received the pall from his holiness. Stigand, nevertheless, performed his metropolitical functions, without paying any regard to the disapprobation of the pope, because he found himself considered and revered as an archbishop by the king and people of England. Nor would he suffer this consecration of Wulfstan to affect his authority; for he obliged Aldred to declare before the king and council, that he renounced all pretensions to ecclesiastical or secular authority over Wulfstan, whom he had consecrated.

Spelman.  
G. Malmes.

Account of  
the Welsh  
synods.

Together with this short sketch of the English ecclesiastical history, it will not be improper to give a brief abstract of the transactions of the Welch church during the same period. In or near the reign of Alfred, six synods were held at Landaff, though the dates of them are very uncertain. In the first, king Tudor was excommunicated for perjury and murder. The second, assembled by bishop Berthguin, pronounced the sentence of excommunication against king Cloti, for the same offences. The third passed the like censure upon Gurcan, for the crime of incest with his own mother-in-law. Bishop Cerenhir convoked the fourth synod, by which king Howel was stigmatized for murder and perjury. The same prelate presided in the



the fifth, and proceeded in the same manner against Conbli, for the same offences. The sixth was held by Civeillianc, against king Brochvail, who had in some shape incurred his displeasure; and all these kings, who were no other than petty toparchs, made very humble submission, underwent severe penance, and payed heavy fines to the church, before they obtained absolution. Besides these, there was another council convened at the same place, on account of some ravages committed against the church by king Nougui, who submitted to the censure of the synod. A subsequent assembly was called to deliberate upon the violation of a sanctuary, from which the magistrate had taken by force a deacon guilty of perfidious murder. They vigorously supported the rights of the church on this occasion, and compelled the civil power to deliver up the criminal. The last convocation was held by Gucan, whom Dunstan had consecrated bishop of Landaff, in order to denounce excommunication against Arthmail, who had murdered his own brother. The criminal submitted to the jurisdiction of the synod, and purchased his pardon with a large sum for the benefit of the clergy.

Hoel Dha, otherwise called Howel the Good, Canons of Hoel Dha. coteremporary with Edmund king of England, has left a considerable collection of canons, composed in an assembly of the states of his kingdom. A committee of one clergyman and twelve laymen was appointed to draw up the form of those laws; the most remarkable circumstance of which is the twelfth canon, by which it was provided, that a married woman was intitled to separation, and the restitution of her fortune, provided the husband should be impotent, afflicted with the scab, or Spelman. Council. have a stinking breath.

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THE  
HISTORY  
OF  
ENGLAND.  
BOOK SECOND.

From the NORMAN CONQUEST to the  
Death of King JOHN.

A. C. 1066.

Consternation of the English after the battle of Hastings.

**B**Y the defeat of Hastings the English were not only deprived of their king, but also the flower of their nobility, and left without any feasible scheme or determination by which they could take measures for repairing the loss they had sustained. Harold's brothers were slain, his children had escaped into Ireland, and Edgar Atheling, though beloved by the people as the offspring of their ancient kings, had neither spirit, capacity, nor inclination, to take the helm of government in such a tempestuous season. Count Morcar and his brother Edwin were still alive indeed, and had retired to London with the remains of the army; but their authority was not sufficient to execute such measures as were necessary for the preservation of the commonwealth; the diversity of opinions arising from different motives of interest, terror, and despair, produced a dreadful anarchy of perplexity and consternation.

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*WILLIAM the CONQUEROR.*

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## WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.

389

A. C. 1066.

William  
reduces the  
town and  
castle of  
Dover.

While this distraction prevailed at London, the Conqueror considered that the loss of a battle might astonish, but would hardly terrify the English into submission; as they had still considerable resources of men and arms, with which they would in all likelihood try their fortune again in the field; that if he should be defeated in his turn, he had no place of retreat in which he could find refuge until he should be reinforced from Normandy; and that the party which he had in England might foment divisions in the state, which would operate for his interest, provided he should give them time to practise on the minds of the people; whereas, should he advance immediately to London, they would unite from the sense of their common danger, before they could find leisure to consult their different views and conjectures. Urged by these reflections, William, instead of marching directly to London, invested Dover, which was strongly fortified by art as well as nature, and provided with a numerous garrison, reinforced by those who escaped from the battle; so that it might have made a vigorous defence: but such was the consternation diffused among them by the success of his arms, that they surrendered in a few days; and he ordered the fortifications to be repaired and augmented.

Gul. Pict.

His adventure with  
the men of  
Kent.

Having tarried about a week in this neighbourhood, in order to animate the workmen by his presence, he began to march for London; and advancing in person, with a small body of horse, at a considerable distance from the rest of the army, he is said to have been met by the Kentishmen with boughs in their hands. When he halted to observe this moving forest, they suddenly threw down their branches, and appeared to be a strong body of men, armed with an intention to dispute his passage; while he considered this phenomenon, the

A. C. 1066. deputies of the Kentishmen approached, and made a tender of their submission, provided he would not infringe their privileges. William granted their demand; and they took the oath of allegiance, and retired. But, even after this impediment was removed, he could not proceed with much expedition, because a dysentery prevailed in his army, and he himself was seized with the same distemper, which not a little retarded his march.

Disputes  
about the  
succession.  
Edgar is  
proclaimed  
king of  
England.

By this time Morcar and Edwin had assembled in London almost all the remaining nobility of the kingdom, to deliberate upon measures to be taken in the present emergency, both for settling the government of the nation, and raising an army to oppose the Normans. The two brothers proposed that Edgar Atheling should be placed upon the throne; and this motion was warmly seconded by archbishop Stigand and the Londoners, who were extremely rich and powerful; but the greatest part of the clergy favoured the designs of the Norman, either because they looked upon him as a devout prince, under whom the church would flourish, or dreaded the curses and resentment of the pope, who had already declared in his behalf. They could not, however, with all their arts, prevent Edgar from being proclaimed king of England; though, they had interest enough to prevent his levying such an army as could support his authority against such a powerful rival. The exercise of his sovereignty was therefore of very short duration.

William advances towards the capital.

William continued advancing in three divisions, by three different routes; and his men were ordered, if they should meet with any resistance, to destroy the country with fire and sword. Accordingly, slight pretences were made handles for committing terrible outrages, at which the duke connived, on the supposition, that such severity would intimidate the English, and facilitate their sub-



A. C. 1066.

submission. As he approached the capital, in this manner, the terrors of the people waxed stronger and stronger, and the clergy employed all their industry and insinuation to dissuade them from making a resistance, which would only serve to exasperate the victor : whereas they might expect the confirmation of their liberty and privileges in the way of negotiation.

These remonstrances, added to the nearness of the danger, had such weight with the citizens of London, who had more at stake than any other subjects of England, that their courage began to flag, and they earnestly expressed a desire of accommodation.

Morcar and Edwin, with a view to animate their party, took the opportunity to sally out from London upon William, who arrived in the neighbourhood of that city at the head of his first division.

Morcar and Edwin make an unsuccessful sally.

They resolved to attack him before he could be sustained by the rest of his army, and hoped to find him fatigued from his march : but the Norman was too vigilant to be so surpris'd ; and gave them such a warm reception, that they were fain to retire with great precipitation. This check dispirited the friends of Edgar, and furnished the clergy with fresh arguments in favour of the measures they had propos'd ; so that they soon made a multitude of proselytes to their opinion, while Edwin and his brother, perceiving Edgar's cause desperate, retreated with their forces to the northern provinces.

Gul. Pict.

By this time the advanced parties of the Normans had burned the suburbs on the Surry side of the river by the command of William, whose army passing the Thames at Wallingford, was now as far as Berghamstead in their march to London ; so that the nobles and prelates, assembled at London, would no longer delay to seize the only opportunity they would have to plead the merit of a voluntary.

The nobility and clergy submit to the Conqueror.

A. C. 1066. tary submission. They accordingly went forth, attended by the magistrates of London, and meeting the duke at the head of his troops, made a solemn tender of the crown. He received them with great courtesy, and after having taken time to deliberate upon the proposal, accepted the offer they had made, and assured them they should have no cause to repent of their choice; he did not think proper however to trust himself in the city of London, but established his head quarters at Berking in Essex, until a fort could be built in the city to overawe the inhabitants.

Gal. Pict.

William is  
crowned at  
London.

Edgar Atheling, encouraged by the report of his affability, went thither to renounce his pretensions, and implored the protection of William, by whom he was graciously received. Morcar and Edwin having no further pretext for keeping aloof, solicited his forgiveness, and disbanding their troops, went to receive his commands; and their example was followed by all the lords and corporations of the kingdom. The Norman, having thus acknowledged the power of election in the people of England, in deigning to receive the crown as a present, was immediately proclaimed king, and appointed the day for his coronation at London. Stigand, archbishop of Canterbury, lying under a sentence of suspension by the pope, to whom William owed great obligations, this prince, in order to avoid any objection that might be made with respect to the informality of his consecration, desired that the ceremony might be performed by Aldred archbishop of York, who, upon that occasion, addressing himself to the English, assembled in great numbers, asked if they chose William duke of Normandy for their king; and was answered in the affirmative with loud acclamations. The bishop of Constance having put the same question to the Normans, and received the like reply, Aldred set  
the

the crown on his head ; and then the Norman took the accustomed oath, importing that he would protect the church and its ministers, govern his people with equity, enact just laws, and cause them to be punctually observed.

A. C. 1066.  
G. Malmesb.

The first act of sovereignty he exercised after his coronation was the seizure of Harold's treasure, which he found amassed at Winchester. Part of this he distributed among the principal officers of his army ; part was given to churches and monasteries ; and a large share sent to the pope, either to discharge a debt which he owed to his holiness, or as a mark of his gratitude for the countenance of that pontiff, to which he in a great measure owed his success. He begun his reign with such moderation as afforded a happy omen to his subjects. He exhorted his principal officers to treat the English with humanity, and respect them as brothers ; he issued orders through his army, forbidding his soldiers to attempt the chastity of the women, or commit the least outrage against the inhabitants, under the severest penalties ; and he published an edict, confirming all the privileges of the people, and all the promises he had made in their behalf. This specimen of his equity had a wonderful effect among the English, who vied with each other in testifying their loyalty and esteem, by presenting him with great sums of money, which helped him to defray the expence of the conquest : nor could they blame his conduct, when he divided among his followers the lands of all the noblemen who had appeared in arms against him, as well those that fell as those that survived the battle. This was looked upon as a common act of justice, especially as he at the same time confirmed the rest in the possession of their estates. Among these, he distinguished with particular marks of favour, Edgar Atheling, called the darling of the English, whom

His moderation and equity.

Gul. Pict.

A. C. 1066.

whom he not only allowed to retain the earldom of Oxford, but affected to care on all occasions, as the nephew of his benefactor Edward. On other English noblemen he conferred posts of importance, both in Britain and Normandy, and projected matches between his officers and the ladies of England, while he provided English husbands for the Norman heiresses, as if his intention had been to unite the two nations.

Mat. Paris.

He granted a new charter to the city of London, confirming the privileges which the citizens enjoyed in the reign of Edward the Confessor; he preserved the Saxon laws and constitution; he made a progress into the provinces of Mercia and Wessex, to confirm by his presence and personal deportment the great idea which the people had conceived from his fame. As the country was infested with robbers, who found shelter in the woods, he exerted himself in exterminating those banditti. He made excellent regulations for the security of the subjects from violence and rapine; and, as another instance of his piety and moderation, founded an abbey on the spot where Harold had fallen, to which he gave the name of Battel, and there ordered mass to be said for the repose of Harold's soul.

Id. Ibid.

He erects  
fortresses.

In the midst of those popular transactions, he did not neglect to take the necessary precautions for preserving his conquest. The Tower of London, and the other forts he had erected at Norwich, Winchester, Hereford, Hastings, and Dover, were provided with strong Norman garrisons; and the citizens of London, as well as the other natives of the realm, whom the Saxon laws obliged to appear once a year in arms, furnished at their own expence, were now disencumbered of this unnecessary burthen. These steps were taken with the more expedition, as he longed to revisit his native country,



country, and manifest to his own natural-born subjects, the importance of his conquest. Having therefore no reason to apprehend any disturbance in his absence among the English, whose affection he had taken such pains to conciliate, he left the regency with his brother Odo, bishop of Bayeux, and William Fitzosborne; and that he might neglect no means that sound policy dictated, he resolved to carry along with him all the English noblemen, from whose power or inclination he could apprehend a revolt or insurrection. The chief of these were Edwin and Morcar, Waltheof son of the renowned Siward, and Edgar Atheling, together with Stigand archbishop of Canterbury, whom he affected to treat with all the exterior marks of the most profound respect: indeed his pretence for being accompanied by all these personages was that he liked their conversation, esteemed their characters, and desired to do them honour in the eyes of the world; though they themselves plainly perceived they were carried abroad as hostages to ensure his conquest and adorn his triumph.

A.C. 1066.

Malmesb.  
de Gest.  
Pontif.

With this train of honourable captives he set sail for Normandy, where he was received by his natural subjects with marks of excessive joy and admiration; and he passed his Christmas at Frescamp, where he was visited by an ambassador with a numerous retinue, sent by the king of France to congratulate him upon his accession to the English throne. He received this embassy with great state and magnificence, calculated to dazzle the eyes of the sender, and spent the whole winter in Normandy in feasting and rejoicing. Notwithstanding all the precaution he had taken to secure the tranquility of his new kingdom, murmurs, discontent, and at last open insurrection, were excited in it, by the tyranny and oppression of the regents, who acted as if they had been ordered to provoke the English to a rebellion, which

A.C. 1067.

William re-  
turns to  
Normandy.

G. Pictav.  
An insur-  
rection in  
Kent,

**A. C. 1067.** which might furnish the Conqueror with a pretence to deprive them of their liberty and constitution. Odo and Fitzosborne took all opportunities of fleecing the people who were subjected to their government; and this oppression was rendered the more intolerable by the insults they underwent in attempting to obtain redress. The inhabitants of Kent, who were more immediately exposed to these outrages, having repeated their complaints and remonstrances to no purpose, at length had recourse to Eustace count of Bologne, who was then at variance with the Norman, and glad of an opportunity to lessen his interest in England. He therefore agreed to land a body of troops in the neighbourhood of Dover, while Hugh de Montfort, the governor of that fortress, was absent, with part of the garrison; and these being joined by the Kentishmen, attacked the castle, which they hoped to surprise; but the Normans were upon their guard, and received them so warmly that they were soon forced to retire with great precipitation: the garrison, perceiving their confusion, made a sally, in which the Boulognese were cut in pieces, and the nephew of Eustace taken prisoner.

**Ord. Vital.**  
**Flor. de Wor.**  
**G. Malmes.**

The prowess of Edric surnamed the Forester.

This miscarriage did not deter Edric surnamed the Forester from seeking redress of his grievances, in his own valour and conduct. He was nephew to the infamous Edric Streona, who had so often betrayed the interest of Ethelfred and Edmund Ironside, and possessed a considerable part of the counties of Salop and Hereford. He had accompanied Edwin and other noblemen to London, when they swore allegiance to William, from whom he had met with a very gracious reception; but in the absence of the conqueror, his lands were continually ravaged by Richard Fitzscrope and other officers belonging to the Norman garrisons of that district, lying under the particular government of William

Fitz-

Fitzosborne. Edric, who was brave, vigilant, and enterprising, did not allow them to make such encroachments with impunity: on the contrary, he commonly lay in ambush, and attacked the pillagers in their return; so that they lost a considerable number of men in these incursions. At length Edric, seeing no end to these insults, resolved to retort their depredations; and being joined by a body of Welch, entered Herefordshire, and wasted the country as far as the Lugge, from whence he returned in triumph, with a considerable booty. Besides this adventure, insurrections were raised in other parts of the country, and were with great difficulty suppressed by the joint forces of Odo and the earl of Hereford: such was the resentment of the nation against the rapacious Normans, that earl Coxo was slain by his own vassals, because he would not head them in open rebellion; and great numbers of those foreigners were set upon and cut off by bands of people that rendezvoused in woods and forests.

A.C. 1067

Flor. Wig.

William, being informed of these commotions, left the government of Normandy to queen Mathilda and his eldest son Robert, and arrived in England time enough to prevent the execution of a scheme which the English had formed to deliver themselves from the Norman yoke. They had already taken the resolution to massacre all those strangers on Ashwednesday, during the time of divine service, at which all the Normans would certainly assist unarmed, as penitents, according to the discipline of those days; but William's arrival broke all their measures, and the chiefs of this conspiracy retired to the North, fortified the city of Durham, and set his power at defiance.

Projected  
massacre of  
the Nor-  
mans.

Whether these attempts and disturbances impressed William with an unfavourable opinion of the English, or he only affected for his own ends

William's  
dislike to  
the English,

to

**A. C. 1066.** to look upon them as a turbulent people, disaffected to his person and government; certain it is, he from this period laid aside his former complacency, and instead of punishing his regents and officers for their peculation, seemed extremely well satisfied with their conduct. Edwin, the most powerful and popular nobleman in England, he attached to his interest by promising to give him his daughter in marriage; and he had raised such a number of fortresses in different parts of the kingdom, that he no longer dreaded the tumultuous and transitory efforts of a discontented multitude. In these sentiments, he determined to treat them as a conquered nation, especially as in so doing he should be able to erect an absolute tyranny, to which he was disposed by nature and inclination; to indulge his avarice, and at the same time gratify his followers, who expected to receive extraordinary recompence, in proportion to the extraordinary success which their arms had enabled him to enjoy.

The people  
of the West  
revolt.

The first signal of his arbitrary power was manifested in renewing the odious tax of Danegelt, which had been abolished by Edward the Confessor; a step which produced murmurs and discontent through the whole kingdom, and induced archbishop Alfred to exhort the king to remit an exorbitant imposition, which could not fail to be attended with fatal consequences. William signified his displeasure at the freedom of this remonstrance; and, far from complying with the advice, ordered the Danegelt to be levied with extraordinary rigour. These proceedings intimidated all that part of the country which was a witness of his great power, and immediately subject to the terrors of a standing army; but, the more remote provinces of Cornwall and Devonshire revolted in defence of their independency, and the city of Exeter



Exeter refused to admit a Norman garrison. William, incensed at this instance of their presumption, began his march immediately from London, though the winter was far advanced; and was met at some distance from the city by the magistrates, who made a tender of submission, and delivered hostages, as pledges of their obedience: but the populace renounced the conduct of their magistracy, and raised a tumult, in which the gates were shut against the king, who, provoked at this outrage, commanded one of the hostages to be deprived of his eyes, in the view of the mutineers; then investing the place, began to carry on his advances in form. The people, terrified at these approaches, sent another deputation to implore his mercy, and surrendered the town at discretion; so that he had an opportunity of manifesting his clemency, by pardoning the rebels and protecting the city from being plundered. He took a more effectual method to prevent future insurrections, by building a citadel, in which he placed a strong garrison under the command of Baldwin de Molis, on whom he likewise bestowed the government of the country.

A. C. 1068.

Exeter is reduced by the king.

Ord. Vitalis.

His queen Mathilda is crowned at Winchester.

He fleeces the English.

From hence he repaired to Winchester, where he kept his Easter. The queen Mathilda arriving at this city immediately after the holidays, was solemnly crowned by archbishop Aldred; and before the expiration of the year delivered of a son called Henry, who afterwards ascended the throne.

William, loth to part with the sums which he had raised by the Danegelt, and being teased with the importunities of his Norman dependents, sent commissaries into every county, to take information of all those freeholders, who had served under Harold, at the battle of Hastings, and confiscated their estates, which were given to Norman officers: this was perhaps the most unjust inquisition that ever any tyrant

A. C. 1068.

Morcar and  
Edwin re-  
volt.

tyrant set up; and therefore increased the dissatisfaction of the English to such a degree, that they were ripe for a general insurrection. The people, on this occasion, naturally turned their eyes upon the two brothers Edwin and Morcar, from whose valour alone they expected deliverance from the Norman oppression. These noblemen felt for the distresses of their country, and were by this time very well disposed to act for its relief, inasmuch as they plainly saw that William doubted their fidelity, and even refused to perform the promise he had made to Edwin. Notwithstanding their great power and interest in England as well as in Wales, the prince of which, called Blethwyn, was their nephew, they would not run the risque of an open rupture with such a formidable prince as William, until they had first solicited succours from Swein, king of Denmark, and actually received assurances of a reinforcement from Malcolm, who at that time sat on the Scottish throne. These precautions being taken, they assembled their forces in Yorkshire, and openly declared their design of dethroning a tyrant whose aim was to enslave and oppress the nation.

An accom-  
modation.

William immediately put himself at the head of his army, and began his march to the North, building as he advanced, strong castles at Nottingham and Warwick, the command of which he bestowed upon William de Peverell, and Henry de Newbourg, whom he afterwards created earl of Warwick. Mean while the two earls, Morcar and Edwin, who expected strong reinforcements from all parts of the kingdom, finding themselves disappointed in their hope, and in danger of being abandoned by the troops already assembled, who exhibited evident marks of fear and consternation as the king approached, resolved to make their own peace; or, if that should be impracticable, to retire into another

## WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.

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other country. They accordingly had recourse to the clemency of the Conqueror, who did not think proper to reject the advances of two such powerful and popular noblemen, and therefore pardoned them without farther hesitation.

A. C. 1068.

Ord. vital.  
He leaves a garrison at York; and concludes a peace with Malcolm, king of Scotland.

Nevertheless he continued his march to York: was met by the citizens, who made their submission, and presented the keys of their city, in which he built a citadel, and secured the place with a Norman garrison. At the same time Archillus, the most powerful nobleman of Northumberland, who had been concerned in the revolt, was pardoned, in consideration of delivering his son an hostage for his future fidelity; and Egelwin, bishop of Durham, having obtained grace for himself and that city, was employed as a mediator to affect an accommodation with Malcolm, king of Scotland. This prince was actually on his march to join Morcar and Edwin, when he received the overtures for a treaty of peace, which was immediately concluded; and then he sent ambassadors to do homage to William for the kingdom of Cumberland, which he held of the English crown.

The sons of Harold land in Somersetshire.

The king, in his return from this expedition, ordered strong castles to be built at Lincoln, Huntingdon, and Cambridge, for the security of these counties; a precaution the more necessary at this period, as they were infested by the incursions of the famous Hereward le Wake, lord of Brunne in Norfolk, who returning from his travels, and finding his patrimony in the hands of the Normans, assembled a hardy band of his vassals, at the head of whom he ejected and slew the intruders, and ravaged the neighbouring country from motives of revenge. The march of William towards the North, and the discontent that prevailed over all the kingdom, encouraged the sons of Harold to return from Ireland. They found means to raise a body of adventurers in that country, with which they

N<sup>o</sup>. 9.

D d

landed



A. C. 1068. landed in Somersetshire, and defeated Eadnoth, who attempted to oppose their progress; but, as the natives did not espouse their cause, they ravaged the country, and reembarked.

Edgar Atheling and several noblemen retire to Scotland.

Flor. Wig.  
Hoved.

These commotions happening on the back of one another, seem to confirm the Conqueror's suspicion and hatred of the English; whom he therefore resolved for the future to rule with severity and circumspection. He ordered a great number of individuals to be imprisoned, without any cause assigned, for no other reason than to prevent their engaging in conspiracies; and those who dreaded the same treatment determined to anticipate his caution, by withdrawing from the kingdom of their own accord. Gospatric and Merleswain, two noblemen in the North, inspired with this apprehension for themselves as well as for Edgar Atheling, persuaded that prince to accompany them to Scotland, to which he accordingly retired by sea, with his mother Agatha, and his two sisters, Margaret and Christina; and there they met with a very hospitable reception from Malcolm, who married the eldest sister, by whom he had Mathilda or Maud, grandmother of Henry II. king of England, in whom the Saxon was united with the Norman blood. Malcolm's generosity and marriage drew a great number of the discontented lords into Scotland, where they formed projects for delivering their country from the Norman yoke. They carried on a close correspondence with all the malecontents who remained in England: some of their number repaired to Denmark, where they importuned Swein for assistance, and others had recourse to the Irish, who seemed very well disposed to succour them in their endeavours: but their chief hope rested upon Malcolm, who had already interested himself so warmly in their behalf. Had all those negotiations been carried on with vigour and unanimity at the same time, and the English agreed in the choice of an enterprising



prizing chief, who had importance enough to maintain his precedency, perhaps William might have been obliged to renounce his conquest; but the individuals were undetermined, jealous, and independent of each other; consequently their councils were distracted, and their allies unresolved.

William was not ignorant of these machinations, and suspecting the Northumbrians, whom he knew to be a restless people, would not long remain quiet after the retreat of his army, he detached Robert de Cumin, with seven hundred soldiers, to take possession of Durham, in order to maintain the peace of the county, of which this general was appointed governor. Notwithstanding the caution he received from bishop Egelwin, who advised him to be upon his guard against the animosity of the inhabitants, he permitted his men to range about the city in small parties, and commit all manner of insults and rapine, and even to make incursions into the adjacent country, which they plundered at will. These violences incensed the Northumbrians to such a degree, that they assembled in great numbers, and, breaking into the city, slew all the Normans that fell in their way; then they attacked the archbishop's palace, in which Cumin was lodged, but meeting with such a vigorous resistance from the governor and his attendants, that they could not force the gates, they set fire to the castle, and consumed Robert and all his followers.

A. C. 1068,

The Normans are  
massacred at  
Durham.

Sim. Dun.

The inhabitants of  
York revolt, and  
are reduced  
by William.

A. C. 1069,

The people of York, animated by the success of this enterprize, fell upon their governor Robert Fitzrichard, whom they slew with part of his garrison; and some noblemen in the country joining them in the insurrection, they besieged the castle, which was bravely defended by William Mallet, who sent immediate notice of his situation to the king. Soon as William received this intelligence he ordered his forces to march, and advanced with such expedition, that the besiegers had scarce any

A. C. 1069. intimation of his approach, until he was in sight of their works. An engagement immediately ensued, and they were routed with great slaughter; for he was so much incensed, that he granted no quarter to the vanquished. Here he staid a week, during which another fortress was erected, and then he retired to Winchester; yet, he was no sooner departed, than the inhabitants attacked both castles, and were repulsed.

The sons of Harold make another descent in Devonshire, and are routed.

The nation being thus unsettled, and every day threatened with fresh commotions, William sent his queen back to Normandy, and a good number of his Norman officers, tired with the fatigue of the service, and intimidated by the prospect of continual wars and desolation, desired they might be dismissed to their own country; rejecting the offers of considerable rewards and preferments, rather than encounter the dangers that must have attended their stay in England. Amongst those who deserted their master in this emergency, were Hugh de Grentemesnil and Humphrey de Tolleul, governors of Winchester and Hastings, whose lands William confiscated out of resentment for their desertion; nor could he ever be prevailed upon to restore their heirs to the dignities thus forfeited. The effects of the negotiations carried on by the English malecontents now began to appear. The sons of Harold made another attempt from Ireland, and landed in the northern parts of Devonshire, but were so vigorously attacked by Bryan, son of Eudo, count of Bretagne, that they were fain to reembark by night, with the loss of seventeen hundred men.

Flor. Wig.

The Danish fleet enters the Humber.

In a little time after this attempt, the Danish fleet appeared on the eastern coast of England, under the command of Osbern, brother to Swein, whose two sons, Harold and Canute, were on board. Their forces landed in different counties, where they met with divers repulses, till at length arriving at the mouth of the Humber, they were joined by

Edgar

Edgar Atheling and the discontented lords, with a fleet of ships and a body of land-forces from Scotland; and sailing up the river together, were still further reinforced by the inhabitants of Yorkshire and Northumberland, commanded by Gaius, Marius, and Archillus. All these forces thus joined, amounted to a considerable army, with which they advanced to besiege York, the garrison of which was commanded by Mallet, who ordered the suburbs to be burnt down, that they might not afford lodgements or materials to the enemy. The wind being very high when this order was put in execution, the flames communicated themselves to the city, which was totally reduced to ashes; and the Danes taking advantage of the consternation and perplexity that such an accident must have produced, entered the castle pell-mell, and put all the Normans to the sword. The whole city, with the cathedral and monastery of St. Peter, perished by this conflagration; and of three thousand Normans, divided in the two forts, none but Mallet, his wife, and children, and some of the principal officers, were spared. These the Danes took prisoners, and carried to their ships in the Humber, together with a very considerable booty; leaving an English garrison in the place, under the command of count Waltheof, son of the renowned Siward.

A. C. 1069.

The Danes  
join a  
reinforce-  
ment of  
Scots and  
English, and  
besiege  
York.

When William was informed of this disaster, he swore by the splendour of God, that he would not leave a Northumbrian alive; and when he arrived on the borders of Yorkshire, he began to put his menaces in execution, committing terrible ravages and destroying every thing that fell in his way. By this time the Danes had taken possession of a strong post, between the Ouse and the Trent, from whence he saw it would be a very difficult enterprize to dislodge them; he therefore had recourse to a more easy expedient, and sent private emissaries, with an offer of a large sum, to

William  
bribes the  
Danes, and  
besieges the  
fortress in  
York,  
which is  
bravely de-  
fended by  
Waltheof.



A.C. 1069. Osbern, and permission to pillage all the sea-coast, provided he would desist from other acts of hostility, and retire in the spring. These terms were embraced, and he returned in the spring to Denmark, where his brother Swein punished him severely for having so perfidiously deserted his allies. After this capitulation, the king advanced against York, the siege of which he immediately undertook, and having made some progress in his operations, ordered an assault to be given. The attack was very furious: but the place was defended so vigorously by the English and Scots, that the Normans were repulsed with great slaughter; the valiant Waltheof planted himself in the breach, and with his battle-ax cleft down the assailants as fast as they advanced. This worthy son of old Siward, count of Northumberland, behaved with such vigilance, conduct, and intrepidity, in the defence of the place, that William began to despair of reducing it, when famine compelled the governor to capitulate. The king, who had been an eye-witness of his extraordinary merit, not only granted him honourable terms, but afterwards bestowed his own niece Judith upon him in marriage, and created him successively count of Northampton, Huntingdon, and Northumberland. He, at the same time, received Gospatric into his favour, and found him a faithful and serviceable adherent in the sequel; but he punished the rest of the officers and soldiers of the garrison with great severity, and mulcted the inhabitants in a very large fine.

The king  
commits  
horrible ra-  
vages in the  
North.

The city being properly secured with Norman garrisons, he gave a loose to his vengeance against the Northumbrians, and ravaged the country in such a cruel manner, that there was not a house left standing between York and Durham. He did not even spare the churches and other public buildings. This desolation was attended with the most

shocking



shocking misery: the wretched people, deprived of habitation and subsistence, wandered about in distraction and despair, seeing their tender infants perishing by famine and cold, and their friends and neighbours falling in heaps, after having endeavoured to prolong their lives by devouring dogs, cats, vermin, and even feeding upon human carcases. From such scenes of horror and distress,

G. Malmes.  
Sim. Dun.

great numbers of the common people fled into Scotland, and settled in the lowlands, which they greatly improved with agriculture: abundance of the better sort, whose estates were confiscated, or whose minds were averse to the Norman sway, retired also to that country, where they were kindly received by queen Margaret and her husband Malcolm, who assigned lands for their maintenance; and from these some of the best Scottish families are derived.

Lesley de  
origine &  
gest. Scotor.

Rebellion multiplied like the Hydra's heads; one revolt was no sooner quelled in one place, than two fresh commotions began in other parts of the country. When William set out on the northern expedition, the people inhabiting the counties of Somerset and Dorset, rose in arms, and besieged Montacute; but were defeated by the justiciary, Geoffry bishop of Coutance, who marched against them with the forces of London, Hants, and Wiltshire: at the same time Edric the Forester invested Shrewsbury, which, however, he could not reduce; and the people of Devonshire and Cornwall undertook the siege of Exeter, which they were obliged to raise, by the bravery of the garrison, assisted by the inhabitants.

The men of  
Cheshire rise  
under Edric  
the Fo-  
rester.

Against the Welsh and Cheshire men, who still kept in a body under Edric, the king began his march from York across the country; and in the course of his route through fens, marshes, woods, and over mountains, the army was so much fatigued, that the soldiers of Anjou, Maine, and Bretagne,

William  
marches to  
Chester, is  
reconciled  
to Edric,  
and crowned  
again at  
Winchester.

A. C. 1069. desired to be dismissed. William, however, encouraged them to proceed, and they arrived at Chester, where he made overtures of accommodation to Edric, whose valour he admired; and that nobleman complying with his proposals, ever after enjoyed a great share of his confidence and esteem, Flor. Wig. This was a more effectual step towards the pacification of Mercia, than that of building castles at Chester and Stafford, which being finished and supplied with garrisons, he marched to Salisbury, where he dismissed all his troops with suitable rewards, except those who had murmured in his march; and these he detained forty days after the rest were disbanded, by way of punishment for their mutinous behaviour: thence he repaired to Winchester, where he was crowned by Ermenfroy, bishop of Sion, assisted by John and Peter, two cardinals sent over as legates from the pope.

His severity  
to the Eng-  
lish, and  
partiality  
to the  
Normans.

All the sources of rebellion being now exhausted by policy of war, William, in order to prevent their rising again, resolved to depress all Englishmen of power and credit in such a manner as to render them incapable of raising any considerable disturbance against his reign for the future. With this view he suddenly deprived them of all their offices, baronies, and fiefs holding of the crown, and distributed them among the Normans and other strangers who had followed his fortune. But as these bore a small proportion in point of number to the English who were stripped, he loaded his countrymen with benefits before he could dispose of all the lands taken from the natives. He bestowed upon his uterine brother Robert, the county of Cornwall, comprehending two hundred and eighty-eight manours, besides five hundred and fifty-eight, which he possessed in other provinces. His next brother Odo was created count-palatine of Kent, and high justiciary of England, with above four hundred

## WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.

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hundred fiefs in different provinces. William Fitz-osborne's services were compensated with the whole county of Hereford. William's nephew, Hugh Loup, was presented with the county-palatine of Chester, to be held with all the rights of regality, as independent of the crown. His son-in-law Alain Fergeant, duke of Bretagne, was put in possession of all the estates formerly belonging to count Morcar, with the same rights of regality. To Roger de Montgomery he gave first of all the towns of Arundel and Chichester, and afterwards the county of Salop. Walter Giffard obtained the county of Buckingham; and that of Surry fell to the share of William Warren. Eudes, count of Blois, received the lordship of Holderness. Raoul de Guair, of Bretagne, was created count or earl of Norfolk and Suffolk, and lord of Norwich. Henry de Ferriers was complimented with the castle of Tutbury. And Geoffry, bishop of Coutance, justiciary of England, possessed two hundred and eighty manours, which he bequeathed at his death to his nephew Robert de Mowbray. All these possessions were held by the same tenour as the estates in Normandy, where the feudal law prevailed in full force; subject to the same forfeitures, and descending in the same order of succession. Thus was laid the foundation of what is called the common law of England, the term and proceedings of which, so far as it relates to tenures and estates, are evidently derived from the language and customs of the Normans.

Spel. Gloss.  
Brady.

In this manner was England delivered into the hands of foreigners; and we may well suppose that the Norman lords would parcel out those lands in copyholds or inferior fiefs to their own countrymen. The barons exercised all kinds of jurisdictions within their own manours: they held courts, in which they administered justice to their own vassals.

Norman  
laws, cus-  
toms, and  
language  
introduced  
into Eng-  
land.

**A.C. 1070.** fals. The disputes arising between the tenants of different baronies were decided in the county or hundred courts, and the suits between barons were cognizable only in the king's tribunals. The judges and lawyers were Normans; consequently the pleadings were carried on in the language of that country: so that the English could expect very little redress, when they complained of the oppression and insults they underwent from their foreign superiors. Although, upon a representation of the hardships suffered in this respect by the people, made by Guismond, afterwards cardinal and bishop of Aversa, William consented to allow them the benefits of some of the old laws, relating to forfeitures, fines, and amerciaments, in criminal matters, and the rates of reliefs and mortuaries due to superior lords, those laws were easily wrested or evaded to answer the purposes of oppression. Nay, to such slavish restrictions were they reduced, that all persons whatsoever of the commonalty in towns and villages, were commanded on pain of death to put out their fires and candles on the ringing of a bell, which was thence distinguished by the appellation of *couvre feu*, or cover fire, since corrupted into *curfew*; a regulation which, though it had been practised at Caen in Normandy, for the prevention of riots, conflagrations, and other mischievous accidents, was, by the free independent spirit of the English, construed into the most despotic exertion of arbitrary power, and resented accordingly.

**Reliq. Spel.**

**Du Moulin.**

**The clergy  
are oppressed.**

The severity of the Conqueror's plan was not confined to the nobility and the commons, but extended also to the clergy, whose charters he violated without scruple, paying no manner of regard to the imprecations which former kings had denounced against those of their successors who should attempt to infringe or annul the exemptions which they granted to bishops, abbeyes, and churches. He ordained that

that



A. C. 1070.

that church-lands, as well as others, should be subject to military service, and furnish a certain number of horsemen in time of war; and if any ecclesiastic refused to comply with this ordinance, he was removed from his benefice, which was given to a stranger: besides, he lodged almost his whole army at free-quarters in monasteries. By these means he maintained his troops, without diminishing his own revenue, and at the same time kept a necessary watch over the conduct of the monks, who were very apt to intermeddle in politics. He executed another project, which was still more provoking to that venerable body, and intailed upon him the secret curses of the people. Being informed by his emissaries, that many families had deposited their plate and money in monasteries, he ordered all those religious houses to be searched, and seized upon every thing that was valuable, pretending it belonged to the rebels: he did not even spare the shrines of saints and the sacred vases on this occasion.

Not yet satisfied with these measures for the humiliation of the clergy, he resolved to depress some bishops and abbots, whose wealth and credit he looked upon with jealousy and disquiet. That he might proceed, however, in a judicial form on such important affairs, he directed the pope's two legates to assemble a council at Westminster, in which Stigand, archbishop of Canterbury, was deposed for having intruded himself into that see, of which his predecessor Robert had not been canonically deprived. Agelmar, bishop of Elmham in East-Anglia, Algeric of Durham, and some other prelates, disagreeable to the king, met with the same fate; while others, to whose conduct he could take no exception, were banished and imprisoned without form of process, and their places filled with strangers from different climes. Lanfranc,

Stigand,  
archbishop  
of Canter-  
bury, and  
several other  
prelates, de-  
posed.

Flor. Wig.

an

A. C. 1070. an Italian, and formerly abbot of a monastery in Caen, he promoted to the see of Canterbury. Thomas, a canon of Bayeux, was created archbishop of York; the dioceses of Winchester, Elmham, and Selsey, were bestowed upon three of his own chaplains, and the abbeys from which the English were expelled, supplied with Norman superiors: nevertheless, it must be owned that these places were filled with persons of distinguished merit.

Sweden,

William's  
vast reve-  
nues,

William, in order to maintain those encroachments on the liberty of the nation, found it necessary to support a large standing army, which could not be subsisted without great oeconomy, as well as an immense revenue: he therefore, among other regulations, erected the court of exchequer, for auditing and passing the accounts of all officers employed in collecting the crown revenues; for determining all actions relating thereto, and punishing the exactions and irregularities of the collectors, as well as the delays and defaults of payment in the subject. His revenue, exclusive of the old demesne land set apart for supplying his household with all sorts of provision, consisted in a land-tax called Danegelt, a quit-rent out of all the lands of England, wardships, reliefs, and fines, livery of hereditary lands, assignation of dower, licences of marriage, leave to sue in the king's court, mulcts, and forfeitures for marrying without licence, and other misdemeanours, besides pecuniary penalties, by which all sorts of crimes were punished; tolls and customs for passage, pontage, freedom of fairs and markets, protection and liberty of buying and selling, and duties laid upon merchandize. Besides these general branches, he received occasional aids due from the fees of those who held of the crown by knight's service; and occasionally levied tillage upon socage tenants, and trading towns: so that his revenue amounted to about four hun-

dred

dred thousand pounds a year, every pound being really equal to that weight of silver; consequently the whole to be estimated at twelve hundred thousand pounds of the present computation: a sum which, considering the difference of prices between that period and the present time, was equivalent to twelve millions of money of modern estimation. How rich and powerful then must this king have been, who, over and above his vast income, constantly maintained sixty thousand knights, by quartering them upon monasteries or assigning lands for their subsistence!

This standing army was more grievous to the subject than all other impositions combined; and far from taming them into abject submission, served only to render them desperate, and excite them to enterprizes that should end either in liberty or destruction. A new conspiracy was formed under the auspices of Frederic, abbot of St. Albans, for driving the king and Normans out of the country; and the scheme was executed with such conduct and secrecy, that a considerable army was assembled before William received the least intimation of their design. Edgar Atheling, arriving from Scotland, put himself at the head of this insurrection, and was proclaimed king of England in all the places that favoured their intention. The Norman was extremely disturbed by this bold enterprize, which seemed to be the prelude of a general revolt; and he imparted the subject of his disquiet to Lanfranc, the new archbishop of Canterbury, who advised him to treat the English with less severity, and commence a negotiation with the rebels before the flame should spread itself all over the kingdom. William accordingly proposed a conference with the chiefs of the malecontents at Berkhamstead, where he heard with great temper the recapitulation of all their grievances, and not only promised to

A. C. 1070.

Ord. Vital.

An insurrection raised by the abbot of St. Albans.

redress

A.C. 1070. redress them, but swore upon the evangelists he would re-establish the laws of Edward the Confessor. The malecontents, satisfied with this condescension in a prince of his character, dismissed their troops, and returned to their own homes. The king no sooner understood they were dispersed, than without paying the least regard to his oath, which he considered as an extorted obligation, ordered a great number of those who had taken up arms to be apprehended, and some of them were put to death, some imprisoned and banished the realm. Edgar returned to Scotland, others fled for refuge to Ireland, Denmark, and Norway, and the abbot of St. Alban's retired to the isle of Ely, where he soon died of grief and disappointment. William immediately seized the effects of his monastery, which he would have ruined intirely, if the execution of his purpose had not been prevented by the remonstrances of his favourite Lanfranc.

Mat. Paris.

Several bishops and noblemen revolt, and retire to the isle of Ely, which is defended by Hereward de Wake.

While the tyranny of William intimidated one part of the nation into unresisting slavery, it exasperated others into efforts of revenge. A good number of these desperate adventurers retired to the isle of Ely, which being surrounded by a morass, they thought they should be able to defend themselves from William's power. Thither the two brothers Morcar and Edwin repaired from court, where they found themselves exposed to the most imminent danger from the king's jealousy; though Edwin was afterwards killed by his own attendants, in his journey towards Scotland, which he undertook with a view to engage Malcolm in the cause of the revolters. Egelric and Egelwin, bishops of Durham and Hereford, together with many other persons of distinction, joined the malecontents of Ely, who chose for their general the valiant Hereward de Wake, who had, since his return to England,



A. C. 1070.

land, never ceased to harrafs the Normans, and was esteemed the bravest soldier and most expert warrior of his age. This nobleman being invested with the chief command, and justly supposing that the place would soon be attacked by William, employed all his skill and attention in augmenting and improving the defences, and laying in a sufficient store of provision for a tedious siege. The king, who was well acquainted with Hereward's capacity, ordered his troops to march immediately, in hope of surprising him before he should be prepared for opposition; but he found such precautions already taken, that he retained no hope of reducing the place by any other way than that of starving the besieged; and therefore he converted his operations into a blockade. This, however, was a very tedious method of proceeding, as Hereward was plentifully supplied with provision, and the more vexatious to William at this juncture, as he was apprised of an irruption into the northern provinces made by Malcolm, king of Scotland.

At length he contrived a scheme which succeeded to his wish. He seized the lands belonging to the abbey which stood within the isle, and distributed them among his courtiers; an alienation that raised a prodigious clamour among the monks, who importuned their abbot Thurstan to make peace with the king, so as that their manours should be restored. The abbot, thus incited, sent a private emissary to William, with a promise of delivering the isle into his hands, together with a thousand marks of silver, provided he would re-establish him in possession of the lands he had taken away. The king complied with this advantageous proposal, and the monks found means to admit his troops into the island, so as to surprise the besieged. Hereward, finding himself betrayed, cut his passage through the Norman troops, sword in hand; but the rest were obliged

They are  
betrayed by  
the monks.

A. C. 1071.

A. C. 1071. to surrender at discretion. Some were punished with the loss of their eyes, others had their hands cut off, and a few were committed to close prison; among these last were Morcar, and Egelwin bishop of Durham, though the latter, for having excommunicated the king, was afterwards starved to death at Abingdon. The monks themselves did not escape unpunished, notwithstanding the capitulation they had obtained. William not only exacted from them another thousand marks, but saddled their monastery with the maintenance of forty horsemen.

Paris.  
Martin.  
Hoved.  
Orderic.

Malcolm  
invades  
England.

William  
marches  
against him,  
and a treaty  
of peace is  
concluded.

During these transactions, Malcolm ravaged the northern provinces with great barbarity, pillaging, burning, and destroying the open towns and villages, and butchering, without distinction of age or sex, all those miserable wretches whom he deemed unfit for the purposes of slavery. Gospatric, governor of Northumberland, finding himself too weak to oppose the progress of Malcolm by giving him battle, endeavoured to make a diversion by entering the kingdom of Cumberland, in which he committed the like excesses; so that they seemed to vie with each other in acts of cruelty and depredation. William, alarmed at these hostilities, had no sooner quelled the revolt at Ely, than he began to march for Scotland, whither Malcolm had, by this time, retired with a prodigious booty. After the English army had sustained incredible fatigues in such a long and troublesome march, the king arrived on the borders, and advancing into Northumberland, found Malcolm in possession of a very advantageous post, from whence he could not attempt to dislodge him, without incurring the most imminent danger. William therefore encamped in his neighbourhood; and the two armies lay facing one another for several days, during which both generals seemed unwilling to begin a battle,

battle, which, in all probability would be attended with the most important consequences, inasmuch as they were pretty equally matched in courage, number, and discipline. These considerations produced a treaty, for the performance of which hostages were given by Malcolm, who likewise did homage for his possessions in Cumberland. Nevertheless, in his return through that county, he fortified Carlisle for his own use; and bestowed the earldom of Northumberland upon Waltheof, after having taken it from Gospatric, on pretence of his having carried on a correspondence with the rebels: that nobleman, thus deprived of his possession, retired to Scotland, where Malcolm created him earl of Dunbar. Edgar Atheling, in consequence of the treaty concluded between England and Scotland, renounced his claim to the throne, and in the course of the ensuing year repaired to Normandy, where he was graciously received and restored to his honours by the king, who settled upon him a mark per diem for his subsistence; though such was the simplicity of this darling of the English, that he afterwards resigned his pension for a fine horse belonging to William, which he had a desire to possess.

A.C. 1071.

An. Sax.  
Ingulph.

G. Malmesb.

Philip, king of France, who envied the prosperity of William, and became jealous of the power of such a formidable vassal, resolved to co-operate with the English malecontents, in hope of seeing the Conqueror still expelled from his new kingdom. During these troubles, he invaded Normandy, even without a previous declaration of war; at the same time Fulk, count of Anjou, spirited up a revolt in the county of Le Maine, which William had formerly annexed to his dominions; the town and citadel of Le Mans was taken, and the Normans driven out of the country. To quell these commotions, the Conqueror raised an army of English, amounting

William  
makes another voyage to Normandy.

- A. C. 1071. to fifty thousand, and leaving his own countrymen to guard the kingdom, landed with the others in Normandy. These being joined by a reinforcement of Normans, he took the field against the French and the revolvers; and having reduced the province of Le Maine, and gained several advantages over the enemy, Philip thought proper to make advances towards an accommodation, and a peace was concluded at Bruyeres. While William resided in Normandy, Gregory VII. otherwise known by the name of Hildebrand, the most insolent pontiff that ever possessed the see of Rome, summoned him by a nuncio to do homage for the kingdom of England, as a fief of the Roman see, and to pay up the arrears of Rome'scot or St. Peter's penny, which had been for some years neglected.
- Ann. Sax. To this peremptory demand, William replied that he held his crown of God only and his own sword; and when the nuncio threatened him with the censures of the church, he published an edict forbidding all his subjects to acknowledge any pope but such as he should approve, or receive any order from Rome without his permission. This resolute behaviour gave Gregory to understand, that the Norman was not a prince to be intimidated by ecclesiastical thunder; and therefore he desisted from his pretensions, upon William's promising to pay the arrears that were due.
- A. C. 1073.
- Eadmer, Brady.

A conspiracy formed against him by the Normans in England.

The king's long absence gave rise to a conspiracy in England, hatched by persons whom he least of all suspected of disaffection. Roger, the younger son of William Fitzosborne, who succeeded to the English estate and earldom of Hereford, had either by way of compliment to his sovereign, or in compliance with some obligation of the feudal law, solicited William's consent to the marriage of his sister with Ralph de Guair earl of the East-Angles. This favour was requested, and flatly refused by the



the king before his departure from England; but as the parties had agreed upon the articles, the ceremony was performed, and the nuptials were solemnized with great magnificence at Exning in Suffolk, where a great number of barons, bishops, and military officers, were assembled on this occasion, and among the rest Waltheof, the new created earl of Northumberland. As the parents of the new-married couple were well acquainted with the character of William, who would never forgive this transaction, undertaken in direct opposition to his will, they took the opportunity, while the guests were warmed with wine, to introduce that subject of conversation; they inveighed against the severity of William's government; they observed that, by means of his excessive impositions, he took away with one hand what he had given with the other; that this tyranny extended even to their domestic affairs, seeing he controuled them in the disposal of their sisters and daughters. They affected to express compassion for the English nation, which he had so cruelly enslaved; they inveighed against the reserve and haughtiness of his disposition; and lastly, expatiated upon the disgrace of being subjected to the arbitrary power of a bastard and usurper. By these insinuations the guests, already intoxicated with the fumes of the entertainment, were inflamed to such a degree of temerity, that they unanimously resolved to take arms and oppose the king's return; and in the mean time determined to solicit the assistance of Swein king of Denmark, the professed and inveterate enemy of the Norman. Next day, when Waltheof began to reflect coolly upon the danger in which he had embarked, he plainly perceived that whatever should happen, he must be a loser, because he and his country would suffer by the change of one arbitrary monarch for a number of

A. C. 1073. petty tyrants, in case they should succeed; and he being the only Englishment engaged in the conspiracy, would be the chief aim of William's vengeance, provided their scheme should miscarry, as he could not help thinking it would: besides, he was influenced on this occasion by motives of gratitude to the king, who had honoured him with particular marks of confidence and favour.

Waltheof  
discovers the  
plot, which  
is easily de-  
feated.

In consequence of those suggestions, he communicated the particulars of the conspiracy to Lanfranc archbishop of Canterbury; and, by the advice of that prelate, took shipping immediately for Normandy, where he made a full discovery of the plot to the king, and met with a gracious reception. William, though he had not yet intirely appeased the troubles of his hereditary dominions, no sooner received this intelligence than he set sail for England, where he found the disturbance already suppressed by the diligence of his brother Odo, whom he had left regent of the kingdom. The two chiefs of the conspiracy had taken the field with their followers, as soon as Waltheof disappeared. Roger attempted to cross the Severne, but was prevented by Wulstan bishop of Worcester, and Urso high-sheriff of the county. Ralph advanced into the neighbourhood of Cambridge, and being defeated at Fagadun by Odo, and Geoffry the justiciary, the right foot of every prisoner was cut off by way of punishment. He himself escaped to his castle at Norwich, which was immediately invested; but despairing of pardon, in case he should fall into the king's hands, he found means to steal away into Denmark. After his departure the castle was for some time vigorously defended by his countess, who, nevertheless, was obliged at length to capitulate, and obtained permission to follow her husband. Mean while that nobleman was favourably received at the court of Swein, who

fur-

furnished him with a fleet of two hundred sail, A. C. 1074.  
 commanded by his own son Canute, and earl Haco,  
 which soon after appeared upon the coast of Eng-  
 land. But by this time all the measures of the  
 conspirators were broken, and the king's forces  
 ready to oppose their landing; so that the Danes  
 did not attempt to make a descent, but retired to  
 the ports of Flanders, from whence Ralph repaired  
 to an estate that belonged to him in Bretagne;  
 and he was there joined by his wife and garrison,  
 from the castle of Norwich.

Ord. Vital.  
 Flor. Wig.  
 G. Malmesb.

William, on his return to England, had seized  
 the forfeited honours and estate of this nobleman  
 there; and condemned Roger earl of Hereford, his  
 own kinsman, to close imprisonment. The rest of  
 the conspirators were either hanged, blinded, or  
 deprived of their hands: but the fate of Waltheof  
 was universally regretted. Notwithstanding the can-  
 dour with which this noble earl had acted in this  
 affair, and the intercession of Lanfranc, who pleaded  
 his cause with the king, he was brought to his  
 trial, upon the information of his own wife Judith;  
 and being an Englishman possessed of a great for-  
 tune, and qualities that excited the jealousy of the  
 Conqueror, he was convicted of treason, and pri-  
 vately beheaded without the walls of Winchester.  
 His body was at first thrown ignominiously into a  
 ditch, where it lay a fortnight, slightly covered  
 with earth, and was then removed to the chapter-  
 house at Croyland, where it was honourably in-  
 terred. This was the last Englishman who main-  
 tained any considerable power or influence in the  
 nation. He was tall and well-proportioned; of  
 undaunted courage and incredible bodily strength;  
 devout, generous, charitable, and exceedingly be-  
 loved: his popularity was such, that a private exe-  
 cution was thought necessary. He was not only  
 bewailed by his country, but considered as a martyr,

Waltheof is  
 beheaded.

A. C. 1075.

**A. C. 1075.** and miracles were said to be wrought at his tomb : while his widow was universally abhorred, and ended her days in misery and remorse.

**Ingulph.**

**Ord. Vita.**

**William re-**  
**turns to**  
**Normandy,**  
**and besieges**  
**the town of**  
**Dal, in**  
**Bretagne.**

The Conqueror having re-established the peace of his government, and extinguished the last embers of rebellion with blood, crossed the sea again, in order to execute his vengeance upon Ralph de Guair, against whom he marched into Bretagne, and besieged the city of Dal, which, however, he could not reduce, before the king of France sent forces to its relief. When he heard of their approach, he raised the siege, and retired with such precipitation, that he left all his baggage and his tents standing. Seeing little probability of succeeding in these attempts against Hoel count of Bretagne, who was Ralph's protector, he set on foot a negotiation with him, and a treaty was afterwards concluded at Bayeux ; the principal article of which imported, that his daughter Constance should be given in marriage to Alain Fergant, Hoel's eldest son ; and the nuptials were solemnized at Caen with great magnificence.

**Ord. Vital.**

**Dissension**  
**between**  
**William**  
**and his**  
**eldest son**  
**Robert,**  
**who raises**  
**an insurrec-**  
**tion in Nor-**  
**mandy.**

Immediately after the consummation of this marriage he returned to England, where nothing remarkable happened : and he now seemed to enjoy some repose from the incessant troubles that had hitherto agitated his reign, when all of a sudden he was involved in family-disquiets. His eldest son Robert, surnamed, from his short legs, Gambaron, or Courtes-huses, had called upon his father, after the conquest of England, to perform the promise he had made, to leave him in possession of Normandy, as soon as the Conqueror himself should be master of this kingdom. This promise he had made in the French council, when he was in Paris soliciting succours for his expedition from Philip ; and afterwards, in a dangerous fit of illness, he re-

newed



newed the promise, declared Robert heir to his hereditary dominions, and as such the barons of Normandy and Maine did him homage. After having been crowned king of England, he had delayed performance, on pretence of the numerous revolts among the English, and the invasions with which he was threatened by the Scots and Danes; but all these objections being removed, and the kingdom totally reduced to submission, when Robert reminded him of his promise, he flatly told him he would not undress himself before he went to bed; and therefore he must wait till his decease. The son, though ambitious, brave, and enterprising, maintained such filial respect for his Father, that, perhaps, he would have taken no step to disturb his tranquillity, had not he been instigated by Ivo and Alberic, sons of Hugh de Grentemesnil, who, having been deprived of their father's English honours and estate, were enemies to the Conqueror, and let slip no opportunity to kindle a dissension between him and his eldest son. They represented to Robert, whose temper, though mild, was yet inflammable, that his father's refusal was not only an injury, but a flagrant affront; and that his intention was to share his Norman dominions between his other two sons, William Rufus and Henry, who had engrossed his whole favour. At the very time, while his mind was irritated by this remonstrance, his brothers happened, whether by accident or design, to behave rudely in his presence, and besprinkled him with some water, which they pretended to throw at one another in jest. This boyish insult provoked Robert to such a degree, that he drew his sword, and mischief would have ensued, had not the father, who was in the neighbourhood, immediately interposed. But, he could not allay the animosity, which from this moment prevailed in his family. Robert and his

A.C. 1075. confederates withdrew to Rouen, in the middle of the night, hoping to surprize the castle; but his design was defeated by Roger de Ivry the governor. Thus the flame broke out, and the young Norman nobility in general declared for Robert; while the king took measures for suppressing the insurrection, by giving orders to seize and punish all the partisans of his rebellious son, some of whom were apprehended and imprisoned, and the rest, who fled, were deprived of their estates. The nobility of Bretagne, Anjou, and Maine, interested themselves in this quarrel, some declaring for the son, and others adhering to the father, and a sort of piratical war was maintained three or four years, with some intervals of accommodation. It was in one of these that William crossed the sea to England; and in his absence hostilities were renewed in Normandy. Philip king of France, envying the power and glory of William, fomented the division in secret, encouraged Robert with magnificent promises of support, and in the mean time assisted him with the means to keep the war alive. Robert likewise received private supplies from his own mother, whose favourite he was, and he found other resources in the friendship of the Norman lords, by whom he was exceedingly beloved.

William, not a little anxious and perplexed by these domestic troubles, levied a strong army of English, and transported it to Normandy, where Robert being in no condition to withstand such a reinforcement, added to the Normans, who still espoused his father's cause, demanded a safe retreat of Philip, who, being unwilling to engage himself openly in a war with the king of England, prevailed upon the Vidame Halie, to admit him into Gerberoy, a strong fortress in the Beauvoisis. In this place Robert was joined by a great number of French noblemen, who went thither, with  
their

their vassals, to signalize their courage under the command of a prince who was counted one of the best soldiers of his time, and from thence they ravaged all the Vexin Norman, and the Pais de Caux. A. C. 1075.

With a view to stop these incursions, William began his march in the depth of winter, and invested Gerberoy, the siege of which he carried on with vigour about three Weeks, during which many sallies were made, and a number of signal adventures in chivalry performed. In one of those actions, Robert perceiving an officer of the English army, fighting on horseback with remarkable prowess and impetuosity, ran at him with a lance, wounded and dismounted him at the first encounter. The next blow would, in all probability, have put an end to his life, had not the vanquished cavalier lifted up his beaver, and displayed the individual countenance of his own father. Robert, shocked at this outrage which he had unknowingly committed against the laws of nature, immediately fell upon his knees, craved pardon with tears in his eyes, and remounted his father with his own hands; William, stung with shame and indignation, instead of granting the pardon he requested, is said to have cursed him with great bitterness. Be that as it will, he forthwith raised the siege, and returned to Rouen, where he was prevailed upon by the importunities of his queen, seconded by Roger earl of Shrewsbury, and some Norman barons, to be reconciled to his rebellious son, whom however, he would not trust in Normandy after his departure, but brought him over to England on pretence of sending him to command an army against the Scots, who had by this time invaded England. Robert encounters and unhorses his father in battle without knowing him. Peace is concluded.

Malcolm king of Scotland had ravaged the northern provinces during the preceding year, while William was engaged in an expedition to Wales, where,

Malmesb.  
Hoveden.  
Polydore  
Virgil.

A. C. 1077. where he received homage from the princes of that country, and compelled them to pay an annual tribute. The Scots having succeeded so well in their first incursion, were encouraged to repeat the invasion, especially as the whole country of Northumberland was involved in the utmost confusion and discord, occasioned originally by the murder of Walcher bishop of Durham. This prelate had, at the death of Waltheof, purchased the earldom of Northumberland of the king; and being a man of an easy, indolent disposition, suffered his officers to oppress the people: he was chiefly governed by Leofwine, his chaplain, and Giselbert, his kinsman and deputy, who, among other outrages, assassinated Legulph, a wise, devout, and charitable nobleman who had often advised the bishop to discard such evil counsellors. Walcher was extremely concerned at the murder of a person whom he esteemed so much; but the perpetrators of it had gained such an ascendancy over him, that instead of surrendering them to justice, he endeavoured to compound the matter, by making some satisfaction to the relations of the deceased. With that view he appeared at a country-court at Gaeshead, where the people were so incensed at his attempt to screen such atrocious murderers and oppressors, that they fell upon them without form of trial, and hewed them in pieces; then turned their swords against the bishop, who was slain with all his followers. Thus aroused, they marched to Durham, and invested the castle; but, in a few days, were obliged to raise the siege, by the vigorous sallies of the garrison. Odo, chief justiciary of the kingdom, was detached with a body of troops to quell this insurrection; but, before he arrived, the mutineers had dispersed, and the principal authors of the massacre quitted the kingdom. Nevertheless, he ordered all those who were in any shape accessary

Malcolm  
ravages the  
North.  
Walcher  
bishop of  
Durham is  
assassinated.

A. C. 1080.  
Flor. Wig.  
Brompton.



fary to the revolt, to be put to death, deprived of A. C. 1080.  
their hands, or mulcted in large sums of money :  
he desolated the whole country, robbed the church  
of all its rich ornaments, and left a strong garri-  
son in the castle.

It was on the back of this disaster, which had  
augmented the people's abhorrence of the Nor-  
mans, that Malcolm entered Northumberland :  
and William sent his son Robert with a body of  
forces to repel him into his own country. The  
Scots did not think proper to wait for his approach,  
but returned to Scotland with a considerable booty ;  
and the prince having advanced beyond the border,  
marched back to the river Tyne, on the banks of  
which, near Monkcester, he erected a fortress,  
which, in contradiction to the other, was called  
Newcastle. At his return to court, finding his  
father still cold and indifferent, he set out upon his  
travels, attended by some of his Norman adherents ;  
and having made the tour of Europe, at last fixed  
his residence at the court of France, where he re-  
mained till his father's death.

Sim. Dun.

Robert  
builds New-  
castle upon  
Tyne.

Orid. Vital.

We have already seen in what manner the king  
had fleeced the Saxons, to gratify his own avarice ;  
and now he thought it was high time to make his  
advantage also of his Norman subjects, among  
whom he had parcelled out all the lands in the  
kingdom. That he might exactly know what im-  
positions they could bear, he resolved to procure  
the most minute information touching the value of  
his own demesnes, as well as the lands which his  
tenants held in capite : for this purpose, he ap-  
pointed commissioners to repair to the different  
counties, and make a general survey of the king-  
dom, by the verdict of juries sworn in every hun-  
dred, wapentac, or county, who specified the ex-  
tent and value of all the arable land, pasture,  
meadow, and wood, possessed by every individual ;  
and

Origin of  
Doomsday-  
book.

A. C. 1080.

and this description included the numbers of free-men, socmen\*, villains, cottagers, bordars, slaves, cattle, sheep, hogs, horses, mills, and fisheries. Six years were consumed in finishing this register, which was denominated Domesday-book, and lodged in the office of the chamberlains of the exchequer. This detail enabled him to regulate the taxations in such a manner, that all the inhabitants should bear their dues, in proportion of the burthen, which he laid on as heavy as they could endure; loading them not only with incredible duties and taxes, but also with the whole maintenance of his army, towards which he did not give one farthing out of his own coffers.

Little  
Domesday.

The king  
depopulates  
Hampshire,  
to form the  
New Forest.

Having taken these measures to gratify his avarice, his next care was to indulge another passion no less pernicious to his subjects. He loved the chase with such fury of desire, that he depopulated the country in Hampshire, to the extent of thirty miles; turning out the inhabitants, destroying all the villages, houses, plantations, and even churches, that stood within that tract, which was reserved for the habitation of wild beasts, and distinguished by the name of the New Forest. In the time of the Saxon kings, all noblemen, without distinction, had a right to enjoy this diversion in countries and forests where the game abounded: but William, either with a view to gratify his own passion for hunting, without participation, or in hope of raising money from trespasses, appropriated all those forests to himself, and published very severe laws† to pro-

\* Socmen were tenants who held by no servile tenure, but payed their rent as a soken or sign of freedom. Bordars, or Bordarii, were cottagers, who supplied the lord of the manor with poultry and eggs. Villains were persons of low and servile condition, bound to certain work and corporal service. The landlord could deprive him at

pleasure of his lands, goods, and chattels, and compel him to pay redemption money, before he could give away his own daughter in marriage.

† A person convicted of having killed a deer, hare, or wild boar, was punished with the loss of his eyes; whereas he might have atoned for murder, by a moderate fine.

hibit,

hibit his subjects from encroaching upon this part of his prerogative. The depopulation of the country was not more severely felt by the commons, than these restrictions were resented by the nobility, both Normans and English, who looked upon them as an intolerable grievance, which deprived them of the chief amusement in which they used to consume their vacant hours. But he paid very little regard to their murmurs, while he derived such advantages from their transgression; for they were so much addicted to hunting, that they chose to undergo all the pecuniary penalties, rather than be deprived of that exercise.

A. C. 1080.

Chron. Sax.

This was one of the few instances, in which he made no difference between Saxon and Norman. In other respects, his partiality to his native country seemed every day to increase. Though he could not, with any decency, abolish the laws that were ascribed to his old friend Edward the Confessor, he introduced divers alterations in the manner of administering justice. He prohibited the bishops from assisting as usual at county-courts, or shire-gemots, and assigned to them a separate tribunal, on pretence of distinguishing between civil and ecclesiastical affairs; but in reality with a view to deprive the prelates of their share of the mulcts and amer-ciements. He instituted new tribunals, some of which were ambulatory and followed the court, to the great inconvenience of the parties; and in these courts the proceedings were carried on in the Norman language, for the attainment of which he erected schools in all the towns and burroughs of the kingdom, commanding all parents to send their children to these seminaries, under severe penalties. He ordered the laws to be published in the Norman tongue; and at court no other was ever heard. William's intention was to supplant the Saxon with his own vernacular language: but all his efforts

William  
makes alterations in  
the courts  
of justice.

mis-

A. C. 1080. miscarried ; the mixture of the two produced a third, which was different from either, and yet had affinity with both. The English were not only robbed of their language, but also pillaged of their substance, and in proportion as they became needy, their invaders grew rich.

Polydore  
Virgil.  
Ingulph.

Odo, bishop  
of Bayeux,  
forfeited  
and impris-  
oned.

Odo, bishop of Bayeux, the king's uterine brother, after having resided fifteen or sixteen years in England, amassed so much treasure that he resolved to purchase the papacy. In the mean time he bought a sumptuous palace at Rome, in which he proposed to live till the death of the present incumbent, that he might be at hand to secure the succession. He took all his measures with the utmost secrecy, and even persuaded Hugh earl of Chester, together with a great number of his adherents and tenants, to follow him into Italy, where he would improve their fortunes under the shadow of St. Peter's chair. Having concerted all his measures for the execution of this project, he took the opportunity of the king's absence to equip a vessel at the isle of Wight, where he proposed to embark : but while he was detained by contrary winds, William received intimation of his design, and resolving to prevent the exportation of so much treasure from his dominions, crossed the sea in person, and surprised him just as he was stepping on board. When he ordered his attendants to arrest Odo, they were afraid of attaching the person of a prelate : so that William was obliged to seize him with his own hand. Odo appealed to the pope, who, he said, was the only person upon earth who had power to try a bishop ; and the king replied, that he did not seize him as bishop of Bayeux, but as earl of Kent, in which capacity he should give an account of his administration. Mean while he confiscated his effects, and ordered him to be transported to Normandy, and imprisoned in the castle

of



of Rouen, where he remained till the death of the Conqueror, notwithstanding all the efforts of pope Gregory, who soothed and threatened William by turns in his behalf.

Gul. Pict.

An insurrection in Normandy, headed by Hubert, vicomte de Beaumont.

Immediately after this transaction, William lost his queen Mathilda, who died of a lingering disorder, after having been his consort three and thirty years; and he was so exceedingly afflicted at her death, that he ever after abstained from his usual recreations. In the midst of his sorrow at this event, he was alarmed by an insurrection in Le Maine, the nobility of which had been always averse to the Norman government. Hubert, vicomte de Beaumont, disgusted by some treatment he had received from the Conqueror, retired to his castle of Susanne, which in those days was counted impregnable, and from thence made incursions into Le Maine, ravaging the country and surprising detached parties of the Norman garrisons. The king marched immediately to his fortress, which he found to strong, that he did not think proper to besiege it in form; but erected a fort in the neighbourhood, in which he left a garrison, to check the viscount's incursions, under the command of his son-in-law Alain Fregnant, who was at first superior to the enemy. Hubert, however, in the sequel, was joined by such a number of friends and allies from France and Burgundy, as enabled him to insult the Normans at the very gate of their fort, and maintain the war for three years, during which he obtained several advantages over William's troops, and at length obtained a complete victory. The king finding it impracticable to reduce him by force, offered to be reconciled to him if he would return to his duty; and Hubert, being furnished with a safe conduct, repaired to England, where he was graciously received by the Conqueror, who

Ord. Vital,

re-

A. C. 1084. re-established him in the possession of his father's estate.

The Danes threaten an invasion of England.

Perhaps this war would not have continued so long, had not William's presence been necessary in England, to provide against an invasion with which he was threatened by the king of Denmark. The English refugees in that country had assured Canute, that their countrymen wanted nothing but an opportunity to shake off the Norman yoke; and that prince believed this was a favourable conjuncture for the conquest of England, to the crown of which he had some pretensions. He therefore equipped a powerful armament; and William being apprized of his design, brought over an army of foreigners from the continent, because he could not confide in the fidelity of his English subjects. At the same time he imposed a tax of six shillings upon every hide of land, which was three times the amount of the ordinary Danegelt; and supposing the Danes would make their descent in the North, he ordered the whole province of Northumberland to be laid waste, that they might find no subsistence at their arrival. Canute being informed of these precautions, desisted from his enterprize; and William, hearing he had laid aside the design, disbanded his forces: but the money raised for their maintenance was never restored. On the contrary, he levied a new tax on occasion of knighting his youngest son Henry, in imitation of an established custom in Normandy, where a present was always made to the father when the son received the order of knighthood.

G. Malmes.  
Rog. de  
Hoved.

Edgar Atheling sets out for Palestine.

William found no difficulty in saddling his subjects with any incumbrances they could bear: he was now as absolute as a Persian emperor; and had nothing to do but speak and be obeyed. The Normans knew their possessions depended entirely upon his pleasure; and the English were so effectually,

ually crushed, that almost every nobleman of their nation was executed, imprisoned, or exiled. Those very few who still breathed their native air, and enjoyed habitations of their own, were so much exposed to the watchful jealousy of the king, that their liberty and lives existed on the most precarious tenure. Edgar Atheling, though there was nothing formidable in his talents, and nothing enterprising in his genius, was still the object of William's fear and suspicion, because he saw that prince, even in the low state of dependence to which he had reduced him, caressed by his subjects, on account of his birth, as well as of the amiable qualities of his mind and person. Edgar, with the small share of discernment he possessed, could plainly perceive the dangerous predicament in which he stood, and therefore desired permission to go and serve as a volunteer against the infidels in Palestine. Nothing could be more agreeable than this request to the Conqueror, who not only applauded his zeal for the christian religion, but supplied him with money to defray the expence of his voyage; and he departed without delay, accompanied by two hundred English gentlemen, who, having lost their estates in England, resolved to try their fortune abroad.

Walsing.

William being thus rid of all apprehension of rivalship, and still eager to augment his own power and territory, revived the pretensions he had to the Vexin Francois, which had been ceded to his father by Henry, king of France, as a recompence for the assistance he had granted to that prince in his distresses. When the duke of Normandy died in the Holy Land, Philip, the successor of Henry, took advantage of William's minority, and the troubles which broke out in Normandy, to seize and appropriate to himself this territory, which the hurry of the Conqueror's more interesting affairs

William revives his pretensions to the Vexin Francois.

A. C. 1084. fairs had hitherto hindered him to reclaim. Perhaps, as he was now in the decline of life, and much incommoded by corpulency, he might have allowed his title to lie dormant for the rest of his reign, had it not been roused by several petty incidents, which irritated the two monarchs against each other. Henry, the youngest son of the Conqueror, is said to have quarrelled at chess with Lewis surnamed the Gross, Philip's eldest son, whom he wounded with the board, during a visit to the French king, who then resided at Conflans St. Honorine, from whence Henry and his brother escaped by the swiftness of their horses. Philip resented this violence, though his own son had been the aggressor, and ordered his troops in garrison at Mante to cross the Eure and ravage Normandy: so that William resolved to retort these depredations; but, in the mean time, he began, by the advice of his physicians, to undergo a course of medicines for the reduction of his unwieldy bulk. Philip, being made acquainted with this circumstance, scoffingly asked one day in public, if the good woman of England was still in the straw? and this sarcasm being reported to William, he sent a message to the French king, giving him notice that he would soon be a-foot; and at his churching present him with such a number of lights\*, as would make his kingdom too hot for his residence.

Meets with  
an accident,  
makes his  
will, and  
dies at Her-  
mentrude,

In order to perform this promise, he levied a strong army, and, entering the Isle of France, destroyed and burned all the villages and houses without opposition: then investing Mante, which he took by assault, the town was plundered, and with all the churches and monasteries reduced to ashes. Before the flames were extinguished, William en-

\* Alluding to the custom of those tapers at the altar, upon their being days, in which women presented wax churched after lying-in.



tered in triumph; and his horse chancing to place A. C. 1084.  
 his fore feet on some hot ashes, plunged with such  
 violence, that the rider was thrown forward, and  
 bruised upon the pommel of the saddle to such a  
 degree, that he suffered a relapse, and was obliged  
 to return to Rouen. There he was attended by G. Malmesb.  
 Ord. Vit.  
 A. C. 1086.  
 Gilbert, bishop of Lysieux, and Goulard, abbot  
 of Jumieges, the most skilful physicians of the  
 time: but, notwithstanding all their endeavours,  
 his distemper gained ground; and they at last gave  
 him to understand that his end approached. Find-  
 ing he could no longer enjoy the fruits of his usur-  
 pation, he resolved to compound with heaven for  
 all the blood he had shed, and the injustice he had  
 committed; and distributed great part of the trea-  
 sure he had amassed in alms to the poor, and be-  
 nefactions to churches and monasteries, particularly  
 to those of Mante, which he had so lately destroyed.  
 Then he settled his last will, in which he bequeathed  
 Normandy and Le Maine to his eldest son Robert,  
 whom he hated; but he saw there was no other  
 method to preserve the peace of his hereditary do-  
 minions. To Henry he left five thousand pounds  
 sterling, and his mother's jointure, without one  
 acre of territory; and though he would not pretend  
 to establish the succession of England, which he  
 had usurped and oppressed in such a cruel manner,  
 he expressed his wish that the crown might devolve  
 to his favourite son William, whom he immediately  
 dispatched with letters to archbishop Lanfranc, sol-  
 liciting that prelate's interest in his behalf. To the  
 abbey of St. Stephen at Caen, he presented his  
 crown and sceptre, the precious stone chalice, the  
 golden candlesticks, and other regalia used at his co-  
 ronation; and gave order for releasing the earls  
 Morcar, Roger, Siward son of Beorn, and Wul-  
 noth, brother to Harold, who had been an hostage  
 and prisoner since the reign of Edward the Con-  
 fessor.

A.C. 1086. feffor. He was not fo favourably inclined towards Odo, bifhop of Bayeux; for when his brother, count of Mortain, interceded in his behalf, William obferved, that he fhould do an injuftice to mankind, in fetting at liberty that prelate, whom he knew to be a turbulent, ambitious churchman, cruel, vindictive, profligate, and rapacious: nevertheless, he yielded to Robert's importunities, and ordered the bifhop to be enlarged, though he prognosticated abundance of mischief as the confequence of his liberty. The Conqueror, when he had thus regulated his temporal affairs, was conveyed in a litter to Hermentrude, a village near Rouen, where he might settle the concerns of his foul, without A.C. 1087. noife or difturbance; and there he refigned his breath, in the fixty-first year of his age, after having reigned two and fifty in Normandy, and one and twenty in England.

His burial  
and charac-  
ter.

His body was depofited in a church at Caen, which he himfelf had founded; and his two elder fons being abfent, Henry fuperintended the funeral, which was far from being magnificent, and attended with a very remarkable incident. The corps being carried into the church of St. Stephen, and the fervice begun, one Afcelin Fitz-Arthur, a Vavafor, preffing through the crowd, and ftanding upon a high ftone, called with a loud voice to the prelates that were in attendance, forbidding them to inter the body in that place, which was the area of his father's houfe, unjuftly feized by the Conqueror, whom he now fummoned before the divine tribunal to anfwer for that act of oppreffion. The bifhops immediately enquired into the nature of this charge, and finding it juft, agreed to pay the demand\*.

From

\* His death was no fooner known than Henry fatched his legacy out of the treafury; the noblemen retired to fe-  
cure their caftles; and the domeftics having robbed the houfhould, ran away: fo that the body was left naked and un-

# WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR. 437

A.C. 1087.  
Pol. Virg.  
Brompton.

From the transactions of William's reign, he appears to have been a prince of great courage, capacity, and ambition, politic, cruel, vindictive, and rapacious; stern and haughty in his deportment; reserved and jealous in his disposition. He was fond of glory, and though parsimonious in his household, delighted in pomp and ostentation. Though sudden and impetuous in his enterprizes, he was cool, deliberate, and indefatigable in times of danger and difficulty. His aspect was nobly severe and imperious, his stature tall and portly, his constitution robust, and the composition of his bones and muscles so strong, there was hardly a man of that age, who could bend his bow or handle his arms\*.

unattended. At the interment, the stone coffin was so ill-proportioned, that in thrusting down the corpse, the belly burst, giving vent to such an intolerable stench, that the people ran out of the church, and the priests were obliged to hurry over the ceremony, notwithstanding the convenience of their incense and perfumes.

\* By his wife Mathilda, of Flanders, William had four sons and five daughters; namely, Robert, duke of

Normandy; Richard, killed by a stag in the New Forest; William and Henry, who in their turns succeeded him on the English throne: Cecilia, abbess of a monastery at Caen; Constance, who married Alain Fergant duke of Bretagne; Adda, the wife of Stephen count of Blois, whose son of the same name mounted the throne of England; Margaret, who died in her infancy; and Eleonora, married to Alphonso, king of Galicia.

## W I L L I A M II.

Surnamed RUFUS.

A. C. 1087.

The Con-  
queror suc-  
ceeded by  
William  
Rufus, who  
owes his  
elevation to  
Lanfranc,  
archbishop  
of Canter-  
bury.

Daniel.  
Bromp.  
Hoved.  
Eadmer.

**W**ILLIAM RUFUS was overtaken by the news of his father's death, while he waited for a favourable wind at Witsand; but this event he thought proper to conceal in England, until he had taken measures for securing the crown. Perhaps he might have found more difficulty in ascending the throne, had Robert been present to avail himself of his right of primogeniture; for William was hated both by Normans and English, on account of his ferocious disposition. However, he owed his sudden elevation to the credit of Lanfranc, and the attachment of Eudes, high-treasurer, who not only made sure of Dover, Winchester, Pevensey, Hastings, and other fortified places, but also delivered into his hands the riches of the Conqueror, amounting to sixty thousand pounds sterling in money, besides plate and jewels to a great value. Part of this treasure he distributed among the churches and monasteries, according to the late king's intention and devisal, in order to attach the clergy to his interest, and part he bestowed in largesses upon the soldiery. As it was found necessary to anticipate any designs that might be formed by Robert's partisans, the archbishop of Canterbury exerted all his influence in favour of William, and having previously founded the individuals, assembled the majority of the bishops and nobility at Westminster, where the ceremony of his coronation was performed, about eighteen days after his father's death. In the beginning of his reign, the English nation began to believe themselves happily disappointed in their expectation of Rufus,





**WILLIAM II.**

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Rufus, who had hitherto discovered a most brutal A.C. 1087. disposition; for he now seemed to pay the utmost regard to the councils of Lanfranc, which were mild and wholesome, and altogether calculated for the advantage of the nation. This conduct, however, was no more than a cloak, with which he disguised, for the present, all the bad qualities of his father, which he possessed without any of his virtues, except courage, if a savage ferocity deserves that appellation.

Robert received the tidings of his father's decease Robert's generosity. at Abbeville, from whence he forthwith repaired to Rouen, and took possession of Normandy without opposition. This prince was the reverse of William in every thing but courage, in which and military capacity he yielded to no warrior of his time. He was open, generous, and humane, even to an excess that became criminal and pernicious; for he impoverished himself to gratify the avarice of his adherents, and bestowed the most considerable governments of the province upon noblemen whose fidelity he had reason to suspect. Morcar and Ulnoth, whom Henry had detained in prison, notwithstanding the Conqueror's orders, Robert immediately enlarged, together with Duncan, the natural son of Malcolm, king of Scotland, who had been taken in the course of the war between the two nations.

Odo, bishop of Bayeux, became his chief coun- Odo hatches a conspiracy against William. selor; but not contented with the favour of the duke of Normandy, he repaired to England, in order to solicit the restitution of his estate in that country, which William had confiscated. He not only succeeded in this suit, but also ingratiated himself with William Rufus, whom he nevertheless resolved to depose. He took umbrage at the credit of Lanfranc, whom he mortally hated for having advised the Conqueror to prevent his journey to

A.C. 1087.

Rome; and he longed to raise Robert to the throne of England, because in this event he laid his account with being prime minister. He communicated his design to some Norman lords, who had estates upon the continent as well as in England, and thought they held them on a very precarious tenure under different sovereigns, whereas an union of the two countries under one king would secure their property in both. This consideration, added to the right of primogeniture and the liberality of Robert, easily determined them in his favour; while the English noblemen, who were so depressed and desperate in their fortunes, saw nothing but advantage to themselves in such a change; and therefore willingly engaged in the conspiracy. Odo's intrigues being attended with such success, he sent an account of his negotiation to Robert, assuring him that nothing was wanted but his presence, and a body of Norman troops, for the recovery of the English crown, from which he had been so unjustly excluded. Robert was extremely well pleased with this intelligence, in consequence of which he borrowed a sum of money from his brother Henry, on a mortgage of the Contantin; then assured his uncle he would not fail to be in England with all expedition, and in the mean time desired he would prepare his friends for an open revolt.

Brompton.

The conspirators of England trusting to this assurance, began forthwith to put themselves in motion. Bath, Berkeley, and Bristol, were secured by the bishop of Coutance and his nephew Mowbray. Roger Bigod rose in Norfolk; Hugh de Grentemessil made himself master of the strong places in Leicestershire. The county of Worcester was occupied by Roger de Montgomery, William bishop of Durham, Bernard de Newark, Roger Lacy, and Ralph Mortimer; and, in a word, such steps were taken for Robert's interest in different parts of

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of England, that in all probability William would have been dethroned, if Robert's indolence had not defeated all their measures. That prince, instead of employing his money in levies to support his friends in England, squandered it away in idle expence and unrequited benefits; and procrastinated his departure until the opportunity was lost: while William exerted himself with incredible activity to stifle the confederacy, before his elder brother could arrive.

A. C. 1087.

Its rendered ineffectual by Robert's indolence.

Lanfranc advised him on this occasion to conciliate the affection of the English; and he accordingly amused them with magnificent promises, to ease them of their burthensome tolls and taxes, and allow them free liberty of hunting. Cajoled by these professions, which were void of all sincerity, the English in general continued firmly attached to his interest, and the Londoners raised an army of thirty thousand men for his service. All the prelates and clergy, influenced by the archbishop, adhered to his cause; and Lanfranc found means to detach some of the most powerful conspirators from the enterprize they had undertaken. So that, in a little time, Rufus was enabled to send a strong squadron of ships to sea, while he marched at the head of his English army, against his uncle Odo, who had fortified himself at Pevensey, in hope of being relieved by the arrival of the duke of Normandy. The king invested the place, and carried on his attacks with such fury, that the bishop, afraid of its being taken by assault, began in a few days to capitulate; but could obtain no terms, until he undertook to put William in possession of Rochester, to which the principal conspirators had retired, under the command of Eustace count of Boulogne. The bishop being conducted to the gate of Rochester, in order to persuade the governor to surrender, the count perceived in his

And the insurrection utterly suppressed.

coun-

A.C. 1088. countenance how much his heart was at variance with his tongue, and took him prisoner without ceremony, as a traytor who had betrayed the confederates. William, thus baffled by the craft of the bishop, undertook the siege of that city, which was so vigorously defended; that he began to despair of success; when an infectious distemper having crept into the place, made such havoc among the garrison, that the chiefs were fain to surrender on condition of being allowed to retire with their horses only, though without any prospect of retrieving their forfeited estates. Odo found a welcome reception in Normandy, and governed that dutchy as prime minister to Robert, who, instead of repairing into England with a strong body of Norman forces, according to the original design of this conspiracy, had indulged his natural sloth at Rouen, and sent over a single vessel with a few soldiers, who were all taken or drowned. After the reduction of Rochester, the king marched towards Durham, to chastise the bishop, who had embarked in the plot; and that city being immediately taken, the prelate was banished, together with all those who had taken up arms in the execution of this project.

Hen. Hunt.  
Rog. de Hov.  
Ord. vital.

William's  
tyranny.

The suppression of this revolt confirmed the government of William Rufus, who, far from performing his promises to the English, by whose valour and fidelity his throne was established, gave a loose to his arbitrary nature, which he had hitherto bridled, and loaded them with the most grievous impositions. Nay, in the very article of hunting, instead of abating the rigour of the law, he made a new act, by which a man convicted of killing a deer was punishable with death; and introduced the method of lawing or maiming dogs, by which the people were effectually debarred of that diversion. Archbishop Lanfranc saw with regret

regret these examples of his tyranny and breach of faith; upon which he took the liberty to remonstrate in the most gentle manner, and in particular to remind him of the promise he had made: but William was incensed at the freedom of his expostulation, and from that instant the prelate's interest declined: though he did not long survive his disgrace; and when he died, was regretted by both nations, as a priest of extraordinary merit. A. C. 1088.

Such was the credit of Lanfranc, that William, rather than run the risque of incurring his displeasure, had, as we have already observed, put a restraint upon his behaviour; but now being rid of that troublesome censor, he indulged all his vicious appetites, and oppressed the people with intolerable exactions, in which the clergy bore their share of oppression. He ordered a new survey to be taken of all the lands and property of the kingdom; and wherever he found them undervalued in the Doom-day-book, he raised the proportion of taxes accordingly. The inventor and executor of all these grievances was one Ralph Lambard, son of a presbyter of Bayeux, who had raised himself to a place in the great council, as well as to the favour and countenance of the king, by making himself subservient to that prince's tyranny and rapaciousness; but, in proportion as he acquired the protection and friendship of the king, he attracted the odium and resentment of the people; and at length a scheme was formed for his destruction. One Gerold, a bold enterprising man, decoyed him into a boat, on pretence of bringing him to the house of Maurice bishop of London, whose chaplain he had been; and conveyed him on board of a ship, which weighed anchor immediately, and put to sea. Two men were provided to assassinate this unpopular minister; but before they could perpetrate their purpose, the ship had well nigh perished in

G. Malmes.

An attempt  
made upon  
the life of  
his minister  
Ralph Lambard.

A. C. 1089

A. C. 1089 in a storm; a circumstance which, in those superstitious times, was looked upon as an interposition of heaven in Ralph's behalf. He did not fail to make the most of this occurrence, and being endowed with a great share of eloquence and insinuation, prevailed upon Gerold to set him safe on shore; he immediately sent for a guard from the next station of soldiers, and, returning in triumph to London, resumed his place in the king's favour and affection.

Ord. vital.

Another  
conspiracy  
against Wil-  
liam de-  
feated.

The miscarriage of this conspiracy against the minister did not deter the subjects so much, but that several prelates and noblemen, incensed at William's arbitrary proceedings, engaged in another design against the tyrant: but this project was frustrated almost as soon as hatched, by the minister's gaining over some of the principal accomplices, and banishing others, one of whom was Ivo Taillebois, upon whose credit all their hopes of success had depended.

Ingulph.

The clergy  
are op-  
pressed.

This plot seems to have owed its original to the resentment of the clergy, whom the king fleeced without justice or remorse; inventing a new method of amassing money, which had never been practised by any of his predecessors. He not only seized the annates or first-fruits of vacant benefices, but kept them in his own hands for a series of years together; and after he had pillaged a diocese in this manner, sold it to the best bidder, without the least regard to the morals or capacity of the purchaser. At the death of Lanfranc, he appropriated the temporalities of the archbishopric to his own use, for the term of four years; and acted in the same manner with respect to the see of Lincoln, and all others that chanced to be vacated during his reign; without regarding the complaints which were made to the pope by the clergy. Indeed this was a very favourable conjuncture for his exercising these



these acts of oppression with impunity, because the church was divided by a schism, and Urban II. too much engrossed by his project for a crusade, to intermeddle in such disputes.

A.C. 1039.  
G. Thorr.

William's avarice was insatiate and his revenge implacable; not contented with having defrauded Robert of his birth-right, he now resolved to deprive him of what he possessed. He was a stranger to the ties of natural affection, and hated his brother for the attempt he had made upon the English throne. Finding his government firmly established at home, he began to make preparations for invading his father's hereditary dominions, and landed in Normandy before his brother had the least intimation of his design; he therefore found him altogether unprovided for his reception, and took St. Valery, Albemarle, and some other places, without the least resistance. In this emergency Robert had recourse to the king of France, who marched in person at the head of an army to his assistance; but he reaped very little advantage from these allies. William found means to detach Philip from the duke's interest, and that monarch retired, leaving Robert more than ever exposed to the calamities of war; for he had trusted so much to the French succours, that he took no other measures for his own defence. William continued to make himself master of one place after another, and even carried on a secret negotiation with Conon, governor of Rouen, who promised to put him in possession of that city; and the duke was on the brink of destruction, when he prevailed upon his younger brother Henry to use those arms as his friend, which he had actually taken up as his enemy. That prince was incensed against Robert, because he had seized the Contantin, which was mortgaged to him for the money he advanced towards the English expedition; and even refused to

William invades the territories of his brother Robert.

pay

A.C. 1089. pay the debt. Henry had assembled some troops to do himself justice; but the duke imploring his assistance, and promising faithfully to discharge the obligation, he espoused his quarrel, entered Rouen unexpectedly, seized Conon, whom he ordered to be thrown headlong from the top of a tower, and took possession of the city for his elder brother.

A.C. 1091. William thus baffled by the union of Robert and Henry, made advances towards an accommodation; and peace was concluded, on condition that Robert should cede to the king the county of Eu, Fescamp, Cherbourg, and all the other places which he had reduced on the coast of Normandy; that William should assist the duke in subduing the province of Maine, which had revolted; restore the confiscated English estates of Norman noblemen; and bestow certain fiefs of that kingdom upon his brother Robert: and lastly, it was agreed that the survivor of the two contracting parties should inherit the territories of the deceased.

Flor.deWor.  
Ord. vital.  
G, Malmes.

Henry is  
besieged in  
Mont St.  
Michael by  
William and  
Robert.

How pleased soever the king and the duke might be with the articles of this treaty, Henry was extremely disgusted, inasmuch as no regard was paid to his interest; and Robert did not seem inclined to keep his promise touching the payment of the money he had borrowed. Incensed at these instances of disrespect, he resolved to take satisfaction by force of arms, and accordingly made himself master of Mont Michael by surprise. Robert, unwilling to lose a place of such importance, prevailed upon William to aid him in reducing the castle, which was situated on an inaccessible rock washed by the sea, and twice a day quite surrounded by the tide. While the two brothers lay before this fortress, which they could besiege no other way than by a blockade, William taking the air one day a-horseback, at some distance from the camp,

camp, perceived two horsemen riding out from the castle, and obeying the dictates of his impetuosity, attacked them with great fury ; but, his horse being killed in the first encounter, overturned and lay upon him in such a manner, that he could not disengage himself. His antagonist, while he remained in this situation, had lifted up his hand in order to deprive him of his life, when he exclaimed in a menacing tone, " Hold, villain, I am the king of England ! " The two cavaliers were immediately seized with veneration and awe, and helping him up, accommodated him with one of their horses. William springing into the saddle ; " Follow me (said he to his conqueror) I will reward thy valour ; and thou shalt henceforth be my knight." Mean while the siege advanced very slowly, and indeed the place seemed to be impregnable ; when Henry, being reduced to a great scarcity of sweet-water, desired his brother Robert would send him a supply, and conquer him by arms rather than by thirst. The duke, whose generous temper he was well acquainted with, complied immediately with his request, by allowing the garrison to fetch as much water as they found necessary ; and at the same time he sent a pipe of wine for his brother's own drinking. Rufus did not at all approve of this generosity, which he ascribed to the folly of Robert, who justified his conduct by observing that the quarrel between them and Henry was not such as ought to destroy the ties of natural affection, and that they might yet live to have occasion for a brother's assistance. After a very tedious siege the castle was surrendered ; and Henry retired to Bretagne, from whence he wandered about for two years, almost destitute of attendants, and sometimes in want of subsistence. At this period too, Edgar Atheling, who had returned from Palestine, was ordered to quit Normandy, and



A. C. 1091. and forbid to enter England at his peril ; so that he withdrew into Scotland, where he always met with a favourable reception.

Malcolm  
king of  
Scotland  
invades  
Northum-  
berland.

During William's absence from his kingdom, Malcolm the Scottish monarch invading England, ravaged the county of Northumberland ; and the people of the North complaining loudly of their being exposed to such calamities, from the king's leaving his dominions, Rufus returned with all expedition, and prevailed upon Robert to accompany him in his campaign against the Scot. The troops being immediately assembled, they advanced against the enemy, who retired as they approached as far as Scot-water, where they received a message from Malcolm, importing that he had nothing to offer to William except a battle ; but he was ready to do homage as prince of Cumberland to Robert, as the eldest son of William the Conqueror. This address occasioned a council of war, in which it was judged expedient to offer propositions of peace, as the army was greatly diminished, and dispirited by sickness, fatigue, and scarcity of provision, and the fleet dispersed and mostly destroyed by a tempest. Robert, therefore, repaired with a few of his attendants to the Scottish camp, where he was hospitably entertained ; and Malcolm assured him that his army was raised with a view to make a diversion in his favour when he was at variance with William ; but now that matters were accommodated between the brothers, he was willing to accede to the treaty on equitable terms. Thus, by the mediation of Robert, peace was concluded between England and Malcolm, who was confirmed in the possession of Cumberland, for which he did homage, and received an annual gratification of twelve marks of gold. Edgar Atheling, who accompanied his brother-in-law, was at the same time reconciled to William, whom he attended to

Lon-



London; but neither he nor Robert liking their A. C. 1091.  
reception at the court of Rufus, they in a few months crossed the sea together into Normandy. Rog. de Hov. Brompton. ]

While William was engaged in this Scottish expedition, the county of Glamorgan in Wales was conquered by Robert Fitzhamon, gentleman of his bedchamber, who had served Jestyn lord of Glamorgan against Rees king of Wales, on certain conditions, which he refused to fulfil after the war was terminated. Fitzhamon, incensed at this instance of ingratitude and injustice, resolved to right himself with his sword; he accordingly assembled his friends and adherents, attacked Jestyn, slew him in battle, and took possession of his country. Disturbance in Wales, Chron. Wall,

Robert, on his return to his own dominions, found his brother Henry in possession of Domfront, and all the Contantin; nor was he in a condition to wrest this territory from that young prince, who was privately supported by William. Rufus, notwithstanding the services Robert had so lately done him in the Scottish war, omitted no opportunity of debauching the Norman lords from their allegiance, and engaging them to fortify their castles for his ambitious designs. While he took these measures for paving the way to the conquest of Normandy, he exercised his authority at home in devising new taxes upon corporations, by which he filled his coffers, and intailed upon himself the hatred and curses of the people, Normans as well as English; for he spunged them without distinction. William's tyranny and rapacious disposition,

They at length flattered themselves that heaven had heard their prayers, as the king was seized with a dangerous distemper at Gloucester. He was himself persuaded that he had not long to live, and discovered some signs of repentance. He even promised to amend his life, and correct the errors of his government, should he have the good fortune to recover his health. The bishops in attendance He sickens and repents,

A.C. 1091. tendance did not neglect this precious opportunity of exhorting him to fill the vacant benefices; and he was so meekened by the apprehension of death, that he immediately complied with their admonitions. Robert Bloet, one of his counsellors, was promoted to the bishopric of Lincoln, and the see of Canterbury was bestowed upon Anselm abbot of Bec in Normandy, who chanced to be at the English court, and could hardly be prevailed upon to accept the dignity under the reign of such an arbitrary prince; but, before he would allow himself to be consecrated, he insisted upon the king's restoring all that he had wrested from the church of Canterbury since the death of Lanfranc; and Rufus promised faithfully to make restitution.

He recovers,  
and oppres-  
ses the sub-  
ject more  
and more.

But finding his health returning, he delayed making satisfaction on various pretences; and at last flatly refused to restore the lands which he had alienated to different persons: on the contrary, he desired the archbishop to confirm those grants; but Anselm would never stoop to a condescension which he thought inconsistent with the interest of the church and the dignity of his character; and this mutual refusal was the source of a quarrel that produced abundance of mischief. All the maxims of reformation which William had avowed in his distemper, were absolutely forgot at his recovery; the prisoners whom he had ordered to be released, were now remanded to close prison; he returned to his old courses of profligacy with redoubled relish; his government was the exertion of the most despotic power, manifested in all shapes of extortion and violence. Justice was banished from the tribunals, which were filled with venal and corrupted judges, who pursued no other aim than that of enriching themselves with the spoils of the people. All governors and persons in office seemed to have been appointed for plundering, not pro-

protecting the subject; the public money stuck to the hands of those who managed it; all honours and rewards were engrossed by panders, parasites, and informers; and no man could expect to insinuate himself into the king's favour until he had fallen out with honour, conscience, and humanity. A.C. 1092.

A great number of people resolved to abandon their native country thus distressed by the united powers of tyranny, profligacy, and corruption; but even this wretched comfort was cut off by an edict, prohibiting subjects to quit the kingdom without the king's permission.

Huntingd.  
Knyghton.  
Brompton,  
Brady.

William's insolence and perfidy were felt by all mankind, so far as they were concerned with him either as friends or enemies. Malcolm having by his ambassadors demanded the performance of the articles in the late treaty, touching the lands of Cumberland to be ceded in his favour, he desired the Scottish king would come in person to his court of Gloucester, where he should have justice. Malcolm went thither accordingly, and was received in a very imperious manner by Rufus, who gave him to understand, that he must submit his cause to the determination of the English peers: a tribunal which the Scot rejected with disdain, proposing, in his turn, that the dispute should be determined by the nobility of both kingdoms assembled on the borders, according to antient custom. William would not submit to this equitable proposal; the treaty was renounced, and Malcolm returned to his own country, glowing with indignation at the indignities he had undergone.

His insolence and injustice towards Malcolm,

He forthwith assembled an army, and invaded Northumberland, which he ravaged as far as Alnewick, the siege of which he carried on with great vigour until the garrison was reduced to extremity; then the governor, whose name was Morel, demanded a capitulation, and on pretence of present-

Who besieges Alnewick, and is slain by treachery.



A. C. 1093. ing the keys to Malcolm on the point of a spear, thrust the weapon into his eye, and killed him on the spot: his son Edward was slain at the same time, and a body of troops prepared for the purpose sallied out upon the Scotch army, which being surpris'd at a time when they thought hostilities had ceased, and overwhelmed with consternation at the murder of their sovereign and his son, fled with the utmost disorder, and were pursued with great slaughter. Malcolm's body was carried in a cart by two peasants to Tinmouth, where they committed it to the earth, but it was afterwards removed to Dumfermling, and interred in the church which he had founded. His queen Margaret was so affected at his death that she survived the news of it but three days; and indeed the fate of Malcolm was very much regretted not only by his own subjects, but also by the English, among whom he left several monuments of his liberality and devotion, particularly the cathedral at Durham, which was erected at his expence. He was certainly a prince of great courage and uncommon virtue, and a generous benefactor to all the English who retired to his kingdom from the tyranny of the Conqueror.

Hunting.  
G. Malmes.  
Buchanan.  
Fordun,

His brother  
Donald  
usurps the  
throne of  
Scotland.

Though this prince left several children of his own, his brother Donald mounted the throne, and expelled all the English whom the late king had remarkably favoured; among which number was Edgar Atheling, who retired to England with his nephews the sons of Malcolm. Donald's next care was to assemble an army and revenge his brother's death: in the latter end of summer he made an irruption into England, and layed waste the country with fire and sword. Rufus being informed of these ravages, sent a body of troops against him, under the command of Duncan, natural son of Malcolm, who then resided at the English court, and had been knighted by Robert duke of Normandy. As he



he advanced, Donald withdrew into Scotland; but A.C. 1093. was so closely pursued, that he was obliged to hazard a battle, though greatly inferior in number to the English, by whom he was routed, and compelled to fly to the western isles for shelter. Duncan, by means of this victory, ascended the throne with the consent of the people; but, as he retained an English guard about his person, the Scots were so incensed at this mark of his partiality to foreigners, that they surprised and put them all to the sword. Duncan, who thought this conspiracy was aimed at his own person, fled with great precipitation; but was recalled by his subjects, and replaced upon the throne, on condition that he should not for the future bring any strangers into Scotland: he was afterwards murdered by Malpeit earl of Merns, at the instigation of Donald, who resumed the reins of government.

Fordun,

William Rufus being freed from a very powerful and dangerous enemy in the person of Malcolm, found himself at leisure to invade the territories of his own brother Robert, who, tired of the frivolous excuses he made for delaying the execution of the treaty, at length sent over ambassadors to insist upon the immediate performance of the articles, or in case of his refusal to fulfil them without loss of time, to denounce a war against him as a perjured prince. William, instead of complying with this peremptory demand, rejected it with disdain, and invaded Normandy with a powerful armament: however, that he might have some colour for the hostilities he intended to commit, he proposed an interview with Robert, to whom he made some proposals that the other did not think equitable. A second conference was opened in presence of all the barons, who had witnessed and sworn to guarantee the treaty; but this proved as fruitless as the former, because William went over, not with a de-

William  
Rufus in-  
vades Nor-  
mandy.

A. C. 1093. sign to effect an accommodation, but to make a conquest of the dukedom. Hostilities immediately commenced, and several towns were reduced by Rufus, who began to congratulate himself on the near prospect of adding Normandy to his other dominions, when the king of France, unwilling to have such a troublesome neighbour, marched with an army to the assistance of Robert, and the scene was immediately changed. They soon retook all the towns and castles which Rufus had subdued and garrisoned; and that prince was so much alarmed at their progress, that he immediately wrote to England for a reinforcement of twenty thousand men.

Detaches the French king from his brother's interest by dint of money.

Being however well acquainted with Philip's disposition, he resolved to assail him with other arms, which he could not withstand. The new levies being assembled at their rendezvous on the sea-side, Ralph Lambard, by the king's direction, disencumbered every soldier of ten shillings which he had received in lieu of provision, and then disbanded the whole body. This sum was immediately remitted to Rufus, at a time when Philip and Robert had advanced as far as Longueville, in their way to Eu, where they intended to besiege him; but by a proper application of the money, the French army was instantaneously dissolved; and no transaction of consequence distinguished this war, from the prosecution of which William was diverted by an insurrection in Wales, and the advice of a conspiracy formed against him in England.

Flor. Wig.  
Hoveden,  
Bromp.  
Hunting.

Insurrection of the Welsh against the Norman garrisons,

We have already seen how Robert Fitzhamon, earl of Gloucester, had taken possession of Glamorganshire, after having slain the ungrateful Tectyn. At the same time Roger earl of Shrewsbury reduced Montgomery; and his son Arnulph, having obtained a grant of Pembrokeshire from the king, took possession, and built the castles of Pembroke,

broke, Cardigan, and other fortresses, to secure his acquisition. The Welsh, however, exasperated at these encroachments, fell upon them in all quarters, and expelled the Normans from all these settlements but Pembroke castle, which they could not reduce: they took Montgomery by assault, and put the garrison to the sword; then over-running the counties of Chester, Salop, and Hereford, they ravaged and burned the whole country, massacring the inhabitants, without distinction of age or sex.

Powel. Chr.  
Hemingf.

These devastations brought over William from Normandy, who marching directly against the invaders, entered their country, and repaired the castle of Montgomery; but the Welsh, instead of hazarding a battle, retired to their woods and mountains, from whence they surprised his parties occasionally, and put them to the sword; so that he was obliged to return with disgrace. He afterwards repeated the attempt with the same ill success; and perceiving that he should never be able to subdue them by the operations of a regular campaign, he ordered the wardens of the marches to encroach upon them by degrees, and maintain their intrusions with strong castles. Indeed his second expedition was relinquished on account of receiving intelligence of the revolt of Robert Mowbray, who, being elated with the victory over the Scots at Alnwick, obtained by his forces, thought the king could never sufficiently recompence him for this important service. William, whose soul was a stranger to gratitude or liberality, paid very little regard to his merit; and Mowbray resolved to take vengeance upon him for his neglect, by removing him from the throne, and setting the crown upon Stephen, count of Albemarle, the Conqueror's nephew. In this design he had found means to engage a great number of malcontent noblemen; and their measures were kept so secret, that the king

Robert  
Mowbray  
revolts.

A.C. 1094. did not receive intimation of the plot, until he had entered Wales.

Is besieged,  
taken, and  
condemned  
to perpetual  
imprison-  
ment.

He forthwith changed the object of his enterprize, and directed his march against Mowbray, who had fortified the castle of Bamburg. In his rout he must have fallen into an ambuscade prepared by the revolvers, had not Richard de Tunbridge, who was concerned in the scheme, repented of his treason, and warned William of the danger. When he arrived at Bamburg, he found it impregnable, from the nature of its situation; and turning the siege into a blockade, erected a fortress called Meuvoisin, or Bad neighbour, so near it as to prevent supplies of provisions from being carried to the besieged; and having furnished this new fort with a strong garrison, retired with the rest of his army. In the course of this blockade, Robert formed a scheme for surprising Newcastle; but his motions were so narrowly watched by the troops in Meuvoisin, that instead of carrying his point, he was forced to fly to the monastery of St. Oswin, at Tinmouth, in which he and all his officers were taken, after a desperate resistance. Morel, his kinsman and confidant, still defended Bamburg, until Robert being brought before the gate with a message to the governor and Mowbray's countess, who was in the place, importing that his eyes should be put out, if they would not immediately surrender; they forthwith complied, and Robert was condemned to perpetual imprisonment. Morel saved his life by making a full discovery of the conspiracy, in consequence of which a great number of unhappy people were punished with great severity. Hugh, earl of Shrewsbury, purchased his pardon with the sum of three thousand pounds. Roger de Lacy making his escape into France, his lands were confiscated and bestowed upon his brother Eu, who had continued faithful to the king; and Odo,



count of Champagne, was imprisoned and deprived of his estate. The count de Eu being accused as an accomplice in this plot, by Geoffry Barnard, and the proof deficient, the count offered to prove his innocence in single combat; a manner of decision imported into England by the Franks and Longobards, since the Conquest. The lists were accordingly enclosed, the day and judges appointed: the duel was fought at Salisbury, and the count being vanquished, it was decreed that he should lose his eyes, and be deprived of his virility. His kinsman William de Alderbury being convicted at the same time, was sentenced to be hanged; and declared at the place of execution, that as he hoped for mercy at the hands of God, he was intirely innocent of the crime laid to his charge; and he was credited by the majority of the nation.

Ord. Vit.

William had no sooner destroyed the roots of this conspiracy, than he found himself involved in a disagreeable quarrel with Anselm, archbishop of Canterbury, who was too scrupulously attached to the immunities and dignity of the church; and was indeed a prelate of a very haughty disposition. He acknowledged Urban II. as lawful pope, though he knew that the king inclined towards Clement; and a law had been enacted during the preceding reign, to prohibit all persons from acknowledging any pope without the king's consent. Anselm pretended that the king had no right to intermeddle in church-affairs: but William, far from subscribing to this doctrine, began to treat him so roughly, that he desired permission to retire to Rome: this request was at first denied, but afterwards granted; though Rufus, in order to mortify the prelate, sent an officer to search his baggage, after he was on board, and seized all his money, on pretence of the law which forbade the exportation of silver. Immediately after Anselm's departure, he appropriated to his own use the temporalities of the see, which

William's  
disputes  
with An-  
selm, arch-  
bishop of  
Canterbury.

A.C. 1095. which he enjoyed all the remaining part of his life; while the exasperated prelate employed all his interest with the pope to embroil William with his subjects; but finding Urban unwilling to engage in his quarrel, he retired to a monastery, where he remained till the death of Rufus.

Sim. Dun.  
Hunting.  
Hoved.

Robert,  
duke of  
Normandy,  
sets out for  
Palestine.

Urban's attention was too much engrossed by the execution of the crusade, to interest himself in such unimportant disputes. His scheme was to rescue the Holy Land from the dominion of the Saracens; a romantic scheme, with which he was infected by a fanatic friar, known by the name of Peter the Hermit. The pope had preached in the council of Clermont, exhorting the nations to engage in this holy enterprize. An infinite number of princes and noblemen had assumed the red-cross, which was sewed on the shoulder as a badge of their undertaking; and among the rest Robert duke of Normandy, who glowed with emulation to distinguish himself in an expedition on which the eyes of all Europe were turned. As he wanted money to defray the necessary expence, he had recourse to his brother William, of whom he proposed to borrow ten thousand marks of gold, on a mortgage of his dukedom. Rufus lent a willing ear to his proposal; but his kingdom being already too much exhausted by unconscionable exactions, he bethought himself of another expedient, which succeeded to his wish. He applied for a loan to the richest of his subjects, secular as well as ecclesiastic; and his request having all the air of a commandment, they generally complied, though not without murmuring. A few people, who pleaded poverty, were compelled to find what was demanded of them; and many ecclesiastics, on pretence of indigence, melted down the plate of their churches and monasteries, in order to supply his occasions. Having in this manner amassed the necessary sum, he

Hoved.

he made a voyage to Normandy, of which he took A. C. 1095. possession for the term of five years, according to the agreement with his brother, who, being thus supplied, set out on the crusade to Asia Minor, and was present at the reduction of Nice, Antioch, and Jerusalem; on which occasions he signalized his valour, conduct, and military skill, above all the princes that embarked in the expedition.

Immediately after the duke's departure, William, as mortgagee of Normandy, demanded of the king of France the French part of the Vexin, which, he pretended, was an appurtenance of the dutchy; and Philip's refusal was attended with a war, which produced no remarkable transaction, and was in a little time terminated by a treaty. Rufus, on his return to England, made another attempt upon Wales, in full resolution to exterminate all the males of that nation; but he was again foiled, and obliged to desist from his design.

William's  
fruitless ex-  
pedition to  
Wales.

The next expedition he undertook was of a more A. C. 1096; laudable nature: at least, if he did not personally engage in the undertaking, he permitted Edgar Atheling to raise a body of forces to effect the restoration of his nephew to the throne of Scotland, which was usurped by Donald Bane, the brother of Malcolm, consequently uncle to young Edgar, the true heir, who, after having with his English army defeated the usurper, took possession of the crown with the unanimous consent of the Scottish nation.

William was obliged to revisit Normandy, and besiege the capital of Le Maine, which had revolted; and, in his absence, the Welch were exposed to terrible calamity by the treachery of one of their noblemen. Owen, father-in-law to Griffith and Cadogan, kings of Wales, being disgusted with these princes, had invited the earls of Chester and Shrewsbury into the country, which they ravaged with

The earls of  
Chester and  
Shrewsbury  
ravaged  
Wales.

A.C. 1097. with incredible barbarity, while the two kings, being unprepared for such a sudden attack, were obliged to retire into Ireland; and their departure leaving their dominions quite defenceless, the English penetrated into the isle of Anglesey, which they destroyed with fire and sword. In the midst of these excesses, Magnus, king of Norway, having made himself master of the isle of Man, resolved to make a descent upon Anglesey; and the English forces attempting to hinder him from landing, an engagement ensued, in which the earl of Shrewsbury being slain, his troops gave way, and the Norwegians took possession of the beach; but finding there was no booty left, they reembarked and departed.

Pol. Virgil.  
Brompton.

Mean while the nation was afflicted with a dearth, which was the more severely felt, as William chose that very juncture to impose exorbitant taxes upon the people, for defraying the expence of public works, which might have been postponed to a more favourable season.

William  
builds West-  
minster-  
hall.

He gave orders for rebuilding London-Bridge, which had been demolished by torrents; for surrounding the Tower with a strong wall and rampart; and for erecting the structure of Westminster-hall, which, tho' one of the largest in Europe, he, on his return from Normandy, affected to despise as a petty bed-chamber. During his residence on the continent, he had endeavoured ineffectually to recover Le Maine by force of arms from Helie de la Fleche, who had seized that province, on pretence of some agreement with Robert before he set out for Palestine. The Manceaux declared for La Fleche, and guarded their passes in such a manner, that William could not enter their country; so that a kind of pyratrical war was maintained, until William's general, Robert Belesme, had the good fortune to take Helie in an ambuscade. The king having secured this enter-



enterprising officer at Rouen, raised a great army A. C. 1097. of Bretons, Flemings, Burgundians, Normans, and English, in hope of reducing the province, without farther opposition: but, he met with a formidable antagonist in the person of Fulk Rechen, count of Anjou, of whom Helie held the county in vassalage, and was obliged to have recourse to an expedient, which he had practised with success on other occasions. In a word, he purchased a treaty of peace, by which he was restored to the possession of Le Maine, in consideration of setting Helie at liberty, with all the prisoners he had taken. The town of Mans was immediately surrendered to William, and the nobility of Le Maine took the oath of allegiance: Helie offered his service to the king, who was at first inclinable to engage such an active warrior in his interest, but he was dissuaded by Robert, count of Meulan, his chief counsellor, who perhaps was jealous of Helie's talents; and this last seeing his offer rejected, told William that since he had no occasion for his service, he could not blame him for attempting to recover the possessions he had lost. The king replied, that he might act as he should think proper, and granted him a safe conduct to La Fleche, which he fortified without delay. Not that he committed any act of hostility while Rufus tarried in Normandy; but when he returned to England, Helie seized the very first opportunity to renew the war.

Having first secured the favour of the Man- Mans sur-  
ceaux, he appeared with some troops before Le <sup>prised.</sup> Mans, and provoked the Norman garrison to make a salley, in which they were routed; then entering the city pell-mell with the fugitives, he was received with loud acclamations by the inhabitants; though the castle still held out. A. C. 1099. A courier dispatched by Robert de Belesme with an account of this surprisal, found William hunting in the New Forest; and he no sooner received the intelligence, than

A.C. 1099. than calling aloud to his attendants, " You that love me, follow me ;" rode directly to the sea-side, near Dartmouth, where he found a vessel ready to sail. But, the weather being very stormy, the ship-master scrupled to weigh anchor, until he was compelled to put to sea by Rufus, who encouraged him, by observing that he had never heard of a king's being drowned. Next morning he arrived at Barfleur, whence he posted to Bonneville, where he assembled his troops, and marched to the relief of his garrison in Le Mans, with such expedition, that Helie was obliged to raise the siege, and retire to Chauteau de Loir. William invested Majol, in hope of taking the place by assault, in which he received such a blow from a stone, as had well nigh deprived him of his life. In consequence of this accident he desisted from the enterprize, and having ravaged the country, returned to England.

Ord. Vital.  
Chron. Sax.

Jerusalem  
taken by  
the crusards.

About this period, the crusards took the city of Jerusalem, where they committed horrid barbarities ; and, intending to erect it into a kingdom, offered the crown to Robert duke of Normandy, who declining that dignity, they elected Godfrey count of Bouillon, whose valour and conduct had greatly contributed to the success of the enterprize. William duke of Guienne, animated by the example of so many princes, and the glory which they had already acquired, resolved to take the cross, and conduct a strong reinforcement to the christians in the Holy Land ; but, as this scheme could not be executed without a considerable expence, which his revenues could not defray, he had recourse to the king of England, who agreed to advance a sum of money, on the same terms which had been embraced by his brother Robert. He had actually raised the greatest part of this supply, with which he intended to cross the sea, and in person take possession of the borrower's dominions, when his voyage was prevented by an accident that was not much regretted by his subjects.

Just

Just as he mounted his horse, in order to take the diversion of hunting in the New Forest, he is said to have been warned by a monk from going abroad that day, inasmuch as he (the monk) had dreamed a strange dream that seemed to presage his majesty's death. Rufus, smiling at his superstition, ordered him to be paid for his zeal, and desired him to dream more favourably for the future. He was attended by Walter Tyrrel, a French knight, famous for his archery, who always accompanied him in those excursions, and to whom he that afternoon gave two arrows out of his own hand. Towards sun-set they found themselves separated from the rest of the retinue, and the king alighted to wait for their taking post at their different stations; when a stag passing, he shot and wounded the animal, yet not so mortally but that he fled, and William followed, in hope of seeing him fall. As the sun beamed in his face, he held up his hand before his eyes, and stood in that posture looking at the wounded deer, when another starting from a thicket, Tyrrel let fly an arrow, which either glanced from a tree or the horns of the stag, and struck the king into the heart. He dropped dead instantaneously, and the innocent author of his death, terrified at the accident, galloped away to the sea-side, where he found a vessel, in which he was conveyed to the continent. William's body, being found by some countrymen passing thro' the forest, was laid a-cross a horse and carried to Winchester, where it was next day interred in the cathedral under the tower, without ceremony or the least marks of respect; for few lamented his fate, and none of the courtiers attended his funeral.

A.C. 1099.  
William is  
killed by ac-  
cident in the  
New Forest.

A.C. 1100.

Malmes.  
Brompton.  
Coutin.  
Ingulph.

Thus fell William, surnamed Rufus, from his red hair and florid complexion, after he had lived four and forty years, and reigned near thirteen, during which he oppressed his people in every form of

A.C. 1100. of tyranny and insult. He was equally void of learning, principle, and humanity; haughty, passionate, brutal, profligate, and ungrateful; a scoffer at religion; a scourge to the clergy; vain-glorious, talkative, rapacious, lavish, and dissolute, and an inveterate enemy to the English, though he owed his crown to their valour and fidelity, when the Norman lords intended to expel him from the throne. In return for this instance of their loyalty he took all opportunities to fleece and enslave them; and at one time imprisoned fifty of the best families of the kingdom, on pretence of killing his deer: so that they were compelled to purchase their liberty at the expence of all their wealth; though not before they had undergone the fire ordeal. He lived in a scandalous commerce with prostitutes, professing his contempt for marriage; and having no legitimate issue, the crown devolved to his brother Henry, who was so intent upon the succession, that he paid very little regard to the funeral of the deceased king†.

Eadmer.

† At the time of his death, he was in possession of the archbishopric of Canterbury, the sees of Winchester and Salisbury, twelve rich abbeys, and a great number of other smaller benefices, which he had kept vacant for his own use: it cannot therefore be expected that the monks should have writ his eulogium. They tell us that he set God and man at defiance; that one day, seeing some persons pass the ordeal unhurt, he affirmed that God was unjust in protecting such people, whom he himself knew to be guilty. He is said to have denied Providence; to have received money from the Jews of Rouen, to compel those among them who had been baptized to resume their old religion; to have assembled the bishops and abbies, in order to dispute in his pre-

sence, after having promised to the Jews, that if they could convince him with their arguments, he would forthwith undergo the operation of circumcision; that after having retained vacant benefices for several years, he set them up for sale to the highest bidder; and upon an occasion of this kind, when two priests were bidding against each other, he perceived a third who stood silent, and asking what he would give for the living in question, the monk replied, that he had nothing to give; or if he had, his conscience would not allow him to be guilty of such a flagrant instance of simony. The king, pleased with the reply, swore by St. Luke's face that he was the most honest of the three, and should have it for nothing. Eadmer, Malmesb. Hunting.

HENRY





*HENRY I.*

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## H E N R Y I.

Surnamed BEAUCLERC.

**H**AD Robert been in Normandy when William died, he would in all probability have mounted the English throne without opposition, according to the treaty concluded between the two brothers, and ratified by the principal noblemen of both countries; but, instead of returning home immediately after the reduction of Jerusalem, he lingered by the way in Apulia, where he married Sybilla, daughter of William count of Conversana, a lady renowned for her beauty and qualifications; and while he indulged himself in the enjoyment of his amiable bride, whose fortune he lavished away among his followers, he lost the opportunity which never afterwards occurred. The English nation was divided between affection and interest: they loved Robert for his good nature and generosity, but they dreaded his indolence and profusion; and justly concluded, from the fame of his expensive living in this last crusade, that on his return he would be absolutely destitute of all means to make good his pretensions. On the other hand, Henry was a native of England, born after his father's accession to the throne; a circumstance which had weight with some people: but the great advantage which this prince had over his brother was being on the spot, to take the first and most necessary measures for the support of his pretensions. He was employed in the same diversion, and in the same forest which proved fatal to William, when he heard of that prince's death, and rode full speed to

A.C. 1100.  
Henry seizes  
the treasures  
of the late  
king, is  
elected, and  
crowned.

A. C. 1100. Winchester, where he demanded the keys of the royal treasury, which were in the hands of William de Breteuil, eldest son of William Fitzosborne, formerly earl of Hereford. That nobleman had just arrived from the New Forest, where he too had been hunting; and, informed of the king's catastrophe, hastened home to take care of his charge, which he flatly refused to resign, telling Henry the sceptre of England belonged to his brother Robert, for whom he would reserve the treasure and his allegiance, according to the oath he had taken. The dispute was on the point of producing bloodshed, when Robert count de Meulant, and a great number of the late king's attendants coming up, espoused the cause of Henry, and compelled Breteuil to surrender the treasure, with part of which they in all probability hoped to be rewarded for their service. He was immediately proclaimed king, after a very tumultuary election, influenced by the populace, which denounced vengeance upon all those who should dare to dispute his succession; and he forthwith began to exercise the regal authority, in preferring William Giffard to the see of Winchester. Then he and his partisans set out for London, where he was anointed and crowned in Westminster abbey, by Maurice bishop of London, after he had taken the coronation oath; and this ceremony was finished in sixty-six hours after the death of the late king: so much was Henry afraid that Robert might arrive unexpectedly; and anticipate his design.

Henry  
grants a  
charter of  
privileges.

As the people had too much reason, during the two last reigns, to think that a king is very apt to forget or disregard his coronation oath, Henry, for the farther satisfaction of his subjects, granted that same day a charter, confirming their privileges, and redressing some grievances under which they laboured. By this deed, which was authenticated in the most solemn manner, and transcribed into a



great number of copies dispersed all over the kingdom, he established the churches in possession of all their immunities, and exempted them from all the hardships they had sustained from the tyranny of Rufus, especially that of being kept vacant for the king's use, and afterwards put up to public sale, without any regard to merit or capacity. He abolished the excessive fines which used to be exacted from the heirs of noblemen for the livery of their lands; and at the same time exempted the vassals of noblemen from the same imposition; he permitted all the vassals of the crown to dispose of their children in marriage, according to their own pleasure, except to the king's enemies; widows were invested with the same privilege, without being obliged to pay for licences from the crown; he granted the wardship of minors to the mother or nearest relation; he suppressed the duty of moneyage, paid once in three years, in consideration of the king's preserving the value of the coin unaltered; he remitted all fines, mulcts, and debts in the exchequer, arising from vexatious prosecution; allowed the barons to bequeath their personal estates by will; and regulated the division of effects belonging to those who died intestate, among their wives, children, and nearest relations: he mitigated the security given by persons charged with felony or misdemeanour; pardoned all murders and other offences committed before his coronation; exempted the lands possessed by the military tenants of the crown from gelds, talliages, and benevolences; he restored the laws of St. Edward, and forgave all rapine and depredation, provided the offenders would make immediate restitution.

Mat. Paris.

In pursuance of the same laudable scheme of reformation and redress, he expelled from court all the ministers and instruments of his brother's debauchery and arbitrary power, and published a severe edict against delinquents and adulterers, de-

Henry reforms the abuses of the court,

A. C. 1100. nouncing rigorous penalties for such transgressions, and death itself to be inflicted upon such as should be found guilty of peculation. He abolished the odious curfew, made an example of his brother's wicked minister Ralph Lambard, who being by this time raised to the see of Durham, was stripped of his dignity and revenue, and imprisoned in the Tower of London, where, however, he was plentifully maintained on an allowance of two shillings a day, the common appointment of state prisoners.

Ord. Vital. and grants a particular charter to the city of London. As Henry had been greatly obliged to the citizens of London, in his acquisition of the throne, he gratified them with a charter of very ample privileges; and, in order to crown the satisfaction of the people, he recalled Anselm archbishop of Canterbury, who was become extremely popular in England, through the influence of the monks, by this time settled in almost all the benefices of the kingdom. That prelate accepted the invitation with transport, especially as the king hinted that he should have the chief direction of affairs, and landed at Dover, to the inexpressible joy of the whole nation; but Henry was a little confounded when he refused to do him homage, adhering to the canons of the council of Bari, which forbade ecclesiastics to receive investitures from the laity, or to pay them homage on any account. The conditions therefore of their living together in a good understanding were, that the king should relinquish the prerogative of investing bishops and abbots, and in every thing relating to the church, pay implicit obedience to the pope. Henry, though shocked at the insolent proposals of this arrogant priest, who wanted to curtail his authority, was forced to temporize, because not yet firmly established on the throne; for he knew that Anselm, by throwing his interest into the scale of Robert, might keep the balance in suspense, and perhaps make the other end pre-

Eadmer. pon-

ponderate. He therefore proposed that agents should A. C. 1100. be dispatched to Rome, with a remonstrance to the pope, desiring his holiness to dispense with the canons about investitures, as such laws were diametrically opposite to the customs of the nation : and that in the mean time Anselm should enter into possession of his see. This expedient was approved, and a kind of truce concluded, until the deputies could obtain an answer from the Roman pontiff.

Henry's interest was concerned in another view to maintain the favour of the archbishop. He had acquired the reputation of a debauchee from the prosecution of promiscuous amours ; and he resolved by one step to retrieve his character, and strengthen his title to the throne. Maude, daughter of Malcolm III. by Margaret, sister to Edgar Atheling, had been brought from Scotland by her uncle, and educated in a nunnery at Winchester, under the eye of her aunt Christian. This princess did the king propose to marry ; but as she had wore the veil, though not a professed nun, it was necessary to use the credit of the archbishop, who assembling a council at Lambeth, took cognizance of the affair in a judicial manner, and declared Maude free from any ecclesiastical restrictions ; so that the marriage was celebrated without further hesitation ; and both kingdoms were extremely well pleased with the event.

He marries Maude, daughter of Malcolm king of Scotland.

During these transactions, Robert duke of Normandy arrived in his dominions, and resumed the reins of government without opposition ; for, although they had been mortgaged to the late king William, Henry did not choose at this conjuncture to claim that part of the succession. But Robert, Eadmer. far from thinking himself obliged by this forbearance, made no secret of his resentment against his brother, who had supplanted him in his absence ; and loudly declared he would take the first opportunity Robert asserts his claim to the English crown.

A. C. 110

A. C. 1101. tunity of doing himself justice. He was confirmed in this resolution by the bishop of Durham, who had escaped from the Tower; and several Norman noblemen undertook to support his pretensions; he even found means to raise a considerable party among the English, and began to make preparations for invading England. Henry could plainly perceive that his subjects fluctuated in their inclinations between him and his brother; and that they made a wide distinction between Robert in Palestine, and Robert in Normandy. In this emergency he had recourse to Anselm, who employed all his credit in fixing him upon the throne; he convened the principal noblemen, Normans as well as English, and expatiated with such eloquence and energy upon the calamities of a civil war, and the sincerity of Henry's intention to make his people happy, that they seemed intirely satisfied, and determined to be quiet. Nevertheless it was no sooner known that Robert was ready to embark, than the majority of the lords declared for him, and part of the fleet followed their example.

Lands at  
Portsmouth.

This defection facilitated his descent at Portsmouth, where he was joined by a great number of his brother's subjects, who promised to risque their lives and fortunes in his service; and assured him that Henry in a little time would be abandoned by the whole nation. Mean while the king exerted himself in assembling his troops; and the archbishop employed his eloquence and emissaries so effectually in representing the impiety of violating oaths, especially that of allegiance to a king, who had made such concessions to his people, that the whole army became staunch to their cause, and a number of noblemen and officers who wavered, were by these harrangues confirmed in their fidelity to Henry. The king's forces thus assured, advanced from Pevensey towards Portsmouth, and the competitors  
were



were soon in sight of each other; though both A. C. 1101. equally unwilling to hazard a battle, because Robert found himself disappointed in his expectation of being joined by the English, and Henry did not know how far he could confide in his soldiers, though he foresaw that his own perdition must be the consequence of his defeat. Anselm took this opportunity of offering his mediation, which was The dispute is compromised. enforced by all the noblemen and prelates in both armies; and after some debate a treaty of peace was concluded, on condition that Robert should quit his claim to England, in consideration of Henry's paying him annually the sum of three thousand marks, and giving up the Contantin, with all that he possessed in Normandy, except Danfront, which he could not cede without breaking the oath he had taken to the inhabitants when they received him into the place; that the adherents of each party should be restored to the lands and honours they formerly possessed, whether in England or in Normandy; and that if either prince should die without issue, the survivor should succeed to his dominions. This treaty being signed and ratified, the armies on each side were disbanded; and Robert, having lived two months in the utmost harmony with his brother, returned in peace to his own dominions.

Henry, having established himself on the throne by virtue of this accommodation, could not without resentment remember those by whom his crown had been brought into such jeopardy; and though he had executed the articles of the treaty even so as to permit the restoration of Lambard to the see of Durham, yet he resolved to punish every person of importance who had joined his brother; and that punishment took place as soon as he could find other pretexts for exercising his revenge. Robert de Belesme, earl of Arundel and Shrewsbury, was the chief aim of his indignation; him therefore he

Chron. Sax.  
Ord. vital.  
Flor. Wig.

Henry impeaches Robert de Belesme, earl of Arundel and Shrewsbury.

A.C. 1101. beset with spies, who took such advantages of his unguarded expressions and impetuosity of temper, that they soon found matter for an accusation, consisting of five and forty articles, which was delivered into his hand one day while he attended at court. He desired he might be indulged with time to prepare an answer; but, instead of employing it for that purpose, he fortified his castles, and put himself in a posture of defence.

He is stripped of his whole English estate and dignity.

The king immediately ordered him to be proclaimed a traitor, and marched at the head of an army to besiege his castle of Arundel, the commander of which desired leave to send for orders to his lord, that he might know whether he should defend or deliver the fortress. The king indulged him so far, and left a sufficient number of troops to block up the castle, ordering the bishop of Lincoln to besiege Tikehill, while he himself advanced into Shropshire, the greatest part of which belonged to Robert de Belesme. Here he attacked Bridgenorth, counted the strongest place in England, and well supplied with men, ammunition, and provision. The garrison consisted of a

A.C. 1102.

body of Welsh, under the command of Roger Fitzcorbet, Robert Nevil, and Ulger Grosvenor, who made such a vigorous defence, that Henry began to deem it impregnable; but the success which he could not obtain by his arms, he owed to the interest of William Pantolf, governor of Stafford castle, who being related to the commanders in Bridgenorth, prevailed upon them to surrender the castle. While Henry was employed in this siege,

Ord. Vital.

the principal nobility of England offered their mediation in favour of Robert; but the king would listen to no terms of accommodation. Having reduced Bridgenorth, he directed his march towards Shrewsbury, and while he approached the place, the earl seeing his affairs desperate, acknowledged his

his crime, and surrendered at discretion, submitting himself to the mercy of the king, who upon his delivering up Arundel and the rest of his castles, granted him his life and a safe-conduct to Normandy; but he confiscated his vast estate, and his brothers were involved in his disgrace. A.C. 1102.

Roger earl of Lancashire, Arnulph de Montgomery, lord of Pembrokehire, Robert de Pontefract, and Robert de Mallet, were likewise divested of their estates, and banished the kingdom. Hugh de Grentemesnil thought to save his fortune by mortgaging it for fifteen years to the king's favourite, Robert count de Meulant, while he himself went on a pilgrimage to the Holy land; but Meulant refused to restore it in the sequel: so that it was for ever lost to Hugh's posterity. By these arbitrary measures Henry quelled the exorbitant power of the noblemen, among whom the lands of England had been distributed by the Conqueror with such profusion, that two or three of them united were almost an overmatch for the whole power of the crown; whereas, by parcelling out their forfeited estates among a great number of his needy adherents, Henry rewarded their attachment, while he enabled them to serve him more effectually, and substituted grateful vassals in the room of dangerous rivals. Divers other noblemen deprived in the same manner.  
Dugdale's Baronage.  
Ord. Vital.

All the nobles in the land were more easily managed than the archbishop of Canterbury alone; that prelate, who was a true monk and bigot to the power of Rome, had conceived two projects, which could not be executed without great difficulty; the first was to establish celibacy among ecclesiastics, and the second to hinder bishops and abbots from receiving the investiture of their benefices from the king. The agents sent to Rome returned about the time of the treaty between the two brothers, and brought an answer from the pope,

Anselm denies the king's right of investing bishops.

A.C. 1102. pope, insisting upon the execution of the canons against lay-investiture. Nevertheless, the king refused to part with his prerogative; and Anselm refused to consecrate the bishops whom Henry had appointed. This dispute produced a quarrel, which would have been attended with the immediate privation of the archbishop, had not his services been so recent and his popularity so great, that it was dangerous to treat him as an outlaw. All hope of accommodation, however, being destroyed by the obstinacy of the parties, Anselm resolved to carry his complaints in person to pope Paschal II. by whose direction he had in all probability engaged in this enterprize. He was accompanied by the prelates who had quitted their benefices rather than acknowledge the king's supremacy; and Henry at the same time sent ambassadors to defend his cause before the

A.C. 1103. pope: these were Hebert and Robert, bishops of Norwich and Litchfield, together with William de Warelwaast, an ecclesiastic of profound learning. Notwithstanding the capacity and eloquence of these advocates, the pope refused to abate a tittle of his pretensions, and even threatened to excommunicate Henry, whom he found as tenacious of his prerogative; when a temperament was proposed and admitted; and both parties agreed, that the bishops and abbots should do homage to the king, and that he should recede from the right of bestowing the investiture of benefices.

Mat. Paris.

Robert is  
harshly  
treated by  
his brother  
Henry.

This dispute with the court of Rome did not divert Henry's attention from his own interest in other particulars. One of his chief aims was to reduce the exorbitant power of the nobility; and he became immensely rich by the confiscation of the barons who had declared for his brother. Among these William de Warenne, earl of Surry, retiring to Normandy, and complaining to the duke of the great estate he had lost in his cause; Robert, who had



had a great share of knight-errantry in his composition, came over immediately to England with eleven followers, in order to persuade his brother to make restitution. Henry pretended to take umbrage at this visit, assembled a council extraordinary, to deliberate in what manner he should be treated, and sent a formal message to know the cause of his arrival in England. When he expostulated with the king about the confiscation of the earl of Surry, Henry upbraided him in very harsh terms with a breach of their treaty, in granting to Robert de Belesme his father's demesnes in Normandy; and Robert began to find himself in a very ticklish situation. The count de Meulant, Henry's prime minister, hinted to him, that he had no other way of escaping the danger, than that of relinquishing his annuity; and when Robert made a present of this pension to the queen, Henry's countenance cleared up, the earl of Surry was restored to his honours, and Robert returned to his own dominions, cursing his own rash, unpremeditated conduct.

Ord. vital.

In the course of the succeeding year, Henry exhibited another flagrant proof of his own avarice, and hatred to those whom he knew or believed to be favourers of his brother's interest. William count de Mortagne, and earl of Cornwall, his own coulin-german, claimed the earldom of Kent, as heir to Odo bishop of Bayeux, who had accompanied the duke of Normandy in his expedition to the Holy land, and died at Palermo in Sicily. This demand was made of Henry at the very time of his being threatened with the last invasion; and the king had amused him with a favourable answer, until the storm was blown over, that William might not be provoked to join his brother: the earl accordingly observed a strict neutrality; but when he repeated his claim after the peace, Henry

not

William,  
count of  
Mortagne,  
and earl of  
Cornwall, is  
forfeited.

A.C. 1104. not only mortified him with a flat denial, but also called him to account for some lands, which he affirmed William illegally possessed. He therefore instituted a process against him; and the justiciaries, after a formal trial, divested him not only of the lands in question, but also of his earldom and whole fortune in England. William, enraged at this oppression, retired to his county of Mortagne in Normandy, from whence he ravaged the territories which Henry had not yet relinquished, according to the treaty with his brother: so that the count and Robert de Belesme, at the head of two separate troops of adventurers, harrassed their native country with continual devastations, while the duke of Normandy had neither inclination nor means to remedy these disorders; for he had already given away all his demesnes\*, except the city of Rouen, where he spent his time in the most indolent amusements. He had indeed made one effort against Belesme; but, being worsted in the field, he left his country exposed to the arms of the victor, who being afterwards joined by the count de Mortagne, the country was left desolate.

Henry forms  
a design of  
making a  
conquest of  
Normandy.

In this emergency, the Norman noblemen, who had nothing to expect from their own duke, implored the assistance of Henry, who was himself a sufferer by those depredations; and he was not a little pleased with this opportunity of intermeddling in the affairs of Normandy, which he had long looked upon with an eye of desire. That he might veil his design with a specious pretext, he represented to his brother in a letter, that his conduct

\* Odericus says, he never refused any thing that was in his power to grant: he lavished away his money in such a manner, that he was continually in want, and so ill provided with cloaths, that he was obliged to

be a-bed whole days, otherwise he must have appeared naked; for his domestics abused his lenity to such a degree, as to steal his breeches, stockings, and other apparel.

could

could not fail to give umbrage to his subjects, A. C. 1104. inasmuch as he protected a set of profligate wretches, who ought to be prosecuted as enemies of the public; that the peace he had made with the rebels, leaving the country exposed to all the misery of war, his subjects could no longer regard him as their sovereign, unless he would rouse himself from that lethargy of indolence in which he was buried, and exert himself like a prince who has the good of his people at heart; otherwise he himself should be obliged to undertake the cause of those who had recourse to his assistance.

While he thus rebuked his brother for mal-administration, and assumed the protector of the oppressed Normans, he saddled his own subjects with an exorbitant imposition, on pretence of maintaining the war, with which the English had no concern; and this tax was levied with all the circumstances of rigour. Having assembled a numerous army, and amassed great sums of money for the purposes of corruption, he set sail for Normandy, and made himself master of Caen, and several other towns, while Robert remained inactive, and unable to traverse his intrigues, or stop the progress of his arms. The duke of Bretagne and the count of Anjou allowed Henry to put garrisons into some of their frontier places, rather than make himself master of the whole dutchy, because they perceived that no peace could be made, except to their prejudice. Among these the bishop of Seez was the most indefatigable incendiary, he had been expelled from his diocese by the two rebellious counts, to whose destruction he therefore devoted his whole interest and attention, and he could never hope to see his revenge accomplished while Robert was left in possession of his dukedom. He cultivated the good graces of Henry with the most officious assiduity; and perceiving the sentiments of his

Henry invades that dutchy.

Ord. Vital.

A.C. 1105. his ambition, took all opportunities of inflaming it with the most artful insinuations. He expatiated on the miseries of the country that groaned under the ravages of two merciless tyrants; he exaggerated the indolence and misconduct of Robert; affirmed that the peace and tranquillity of Normandy would never be restored until it should have changed its master; and conjured the king to assume the reins of government, and deliver the antient subjects of his family from the slavery to which they were reduced. Henry listened with pleasure to this remonstrance, and affected to pity the distress of the Normans, which he promised to alleviate with all his power, though at the same time he professed the utmost regret in being obliged to take any step to his brother's prejudice.

Henry returns to England, whither he is followed by his brother Robert, whose proposal he rejects.

Ord. vital.

He now prosecuted the war with redoubled vigour, reducing one place after another with great rapidity, and towards the end of the campaign returned to England, to levy fresh taxes and troops, in order to finish the work he had so successfully begun. Robert being by this time convinced of his brother's design to deprive him of his duchy, and finding his affairs in a desperate situation, took the strange resolution of appealing to Henry's natural affection, which he estimated according to the emotions of his own heart, and repaired to England during the winter, in hope of prevailing upon his brother to desist from his enterprize, and restore the towns he had taken; but he had so far misreckoned upon his brother's good nature, that he found himself treated with the utmost insolence and contempt; and Henry, far from complying with his request, gave him to understand he might think himself extremely happy in being permitted to return. Thus disappointed and despised, he quitted the kingdom in a transport of rage, pouring forth execrations and menaces, to which the king paid no sort of regard.

Not



Not but that he was under some apprehension that Robert's wrongs would excite the compassion of the English nation; and as he found it necessary to impose new taxes for the prosecution of the war, he assembled a general council, in which he pretended to have received letters from the pope, exhorting him to rescue Normandy from the misgovernment of Robert, whose failings and infirmities he painted in the most glaring colours; and, amongst other particularities of his character, expatiated upon the contempt which that prince had expressed for the English. On the other hand, he recapitulated the popular actions of his own reign, dwelt particularly on the charter of privileges he had granted at his coronation; promised to govern them always by the most equitable laws; and concluded his harrangue with observing, that while he was assured of the affection of his subjects, he should never dread the machinations of his enemies. He was not disappointed in his expectation of success from this popular address; the assembly thought themselves honoured in the king's confidence, and believing that his promises were sincere, unanimously assured him they would spend their lives and fortunes in his service. He took advantage of this favourable disposition to receive new subsidies, which enabled him to make a considerable augmentation in his army; and, as soon as the season would permit, crossed the sea, in order to finish the conquest of Normandy.

A. C. 1105.

Henry makes a speech in a general council of prelates and barons.

G. Malmes.  
Mat. Paris.

END of the FIRST VOLUME.



